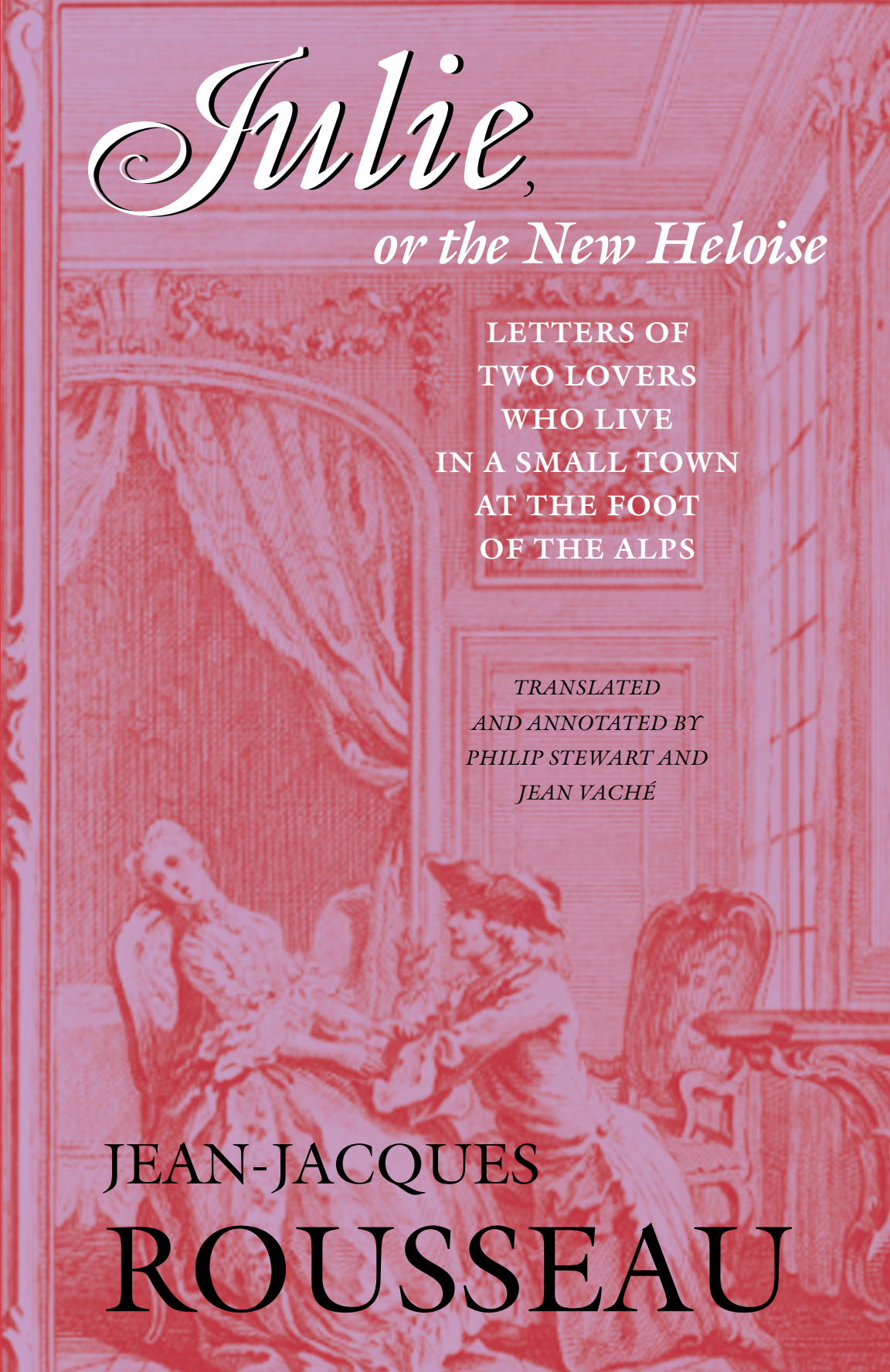
Julie, or the New Heloise

LETTERS OF TWO LOVERS WHO LIVE IN A SMALL TOWN AT THE FOOT OF THE ALPS

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY PHILIP STEWART AND JEAN VACHÉ



JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

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JULIE,
OR THE NEW HELOISE

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THE COLLECTED WRITINGS OF ROUSSEAU
Vol. 6

TRANSLATED AND ANNOTATED BY
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Introduction

After the tragic passions that characterized the novels of Mme de Lafayette in the late seventeenth century and Antoine Prévost in the 1730s and 1740s, many of the most prominent works in France by the mid-eighteenth century were quintessentially Parisian, featuring wit and elegance. In them love typically took the form of successive, often furtive affairs. Rousseau's novel, unlike those of much-read contemporaries such as Marivaux, Duclos, and Crébillon, had its source in an intense need for genuine sentiment and a profound conviction that there exist natural values yet uncorrupted in some remote places. Sentiment was already the newest vogue in the theatre, with the success of *comédie larmoyante* (tearful comedy) in the 1740s, soon leading to "serious comedy" or "bourgeois tragedy" in the late 1750s; but Rousseau had no confidence in the efficacy of a brief spate of superficial emotion produced in such an artificial and morally compromised place as the theatre: this he makes quite clear in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert*. The idea of spinning a long novel around such ostensibly unlikely material was doubtless inspired in large part by Richardson, but the feelings and opinions are Rousseau's own and derive from those elaborated in his early works. And what he did with them was going to affect profoundly the esthetic sensibilities of generations to come, besides reinforcing his social and political theories in ways that would permanently frame discourse about individuality, social organization, political power, and social control.

As he relates in his *Confessions*, Rousseau had planned to write a systematic treatise (which he eventually abandoned) called *La Morale sensitive, ou le matérialisme du Sage*,[1] in which he would have worked out the relationships between physical environment, feeling, and morality. It never took focus, which is not surprising because materialism was fundamentally inimical to Rousseau, and much of its unfulfilled energy may well have gone into *Julie*. Nevertheless, at the outset *Julie* was not essentially an intellectual undertaking although it was certainly an ideological one. It was born of love and emotion; the characters and setting came before the plot, which gradually took shape as they wrote to each other (*Collected Writings*, V. 361–362). Their purity of soul was of a piece with the idyllic nature of the Swiss landscape. Virtue itself is not a gift of nature: it requires will, it is a kind of

heroism that overcomes obstacles; but one can be *unspoiled* in places where city vice has not yet penetrated, and thus be inclined to *love* virtue. A small group of characters is animated by a mutual assurance that they possess like values and cannot go wrong placing full faith in each other. In many ways the key to this underlying conviction is simplicity: just as unadorned melody is the clearest expression of the soul, rustic ways, uncluttered thoughts, honest morality, and pure sentiments all imply each other. These are the real subject of *Julie*, and this explains why Rousseau takes such pains in his prefaces to explain what kind of reader he can hope to move; for he insisted his novel was to be read, as it was written, with the heart.

When he began *Julie* Rousseau was already well known for his two *Discourses* and musical works; during its writing he became even more so for his *Letter to M. d'Alembert*. The existence of this paradoxical and unorthodox novel by a man known for denouncing worldly culture was much bruited about in the two years separating its essential completion from its release in February of 1761. Rousseau evokes in his *Confessions* the keen air of expectancy with which it was awaited: "All of Paris was impatient to see this novel; the booksellers of the rue St. Jacques and at the Palais Royal were besieged by people who were asking for news about it."[2] It was snatched up and read avidly; one anecdote told by Rousseau helps to capture a general need this book seemed to answer:

> It was published at the beginning of Carnival. The peddler brought it to Madame the Princesse de Talmont one day when there was a ball at the Opera.[3] After supping she had herself dressed to go to it, and she began to read the new Novel while awaiting the time. At midnight she ordered them to get the horses ready and continued to read. They came to tell her that her horses were ready; she gave no answer. Seeing that she was losing track of time, her servants came to notify her that it was two o'clock. There is no rush yet, she said, still reading. Some time later, her watch having stopped, she rang to find out what time it was. She was told it was four o'clock. That being the case, she said, it is too late to go to the ball, unhitch the horses. She had herself undressed and spent the rest of the night reading. (*Confessions*, Book XI, *Collected Writings*, V. 458)

Julie became one of the greatest international publishing successes in the eighteenth century, with scores of editions, and the English translation itself went through fifteen editions before it withered on the vine in 1812.

In both his prefaces Rousseau maintains a studied ambiguity concerning the veracity of the story. This hedging has something to do with the curiosity it fomented, all the more so because many people were aware of his frustrated passion for Sophie d'Houdetot (*Confessions*, Book IX) and believed the novel would reflect that (mis)adventure. There is much evidence of a persistent belief that Rousseau was himself the hero of his novel, supported by the anecdote he himself tells about Madame de Po-

lignac's attempt to obtain Julie's portrait from him (*Collected Writings*, V. 458). In fact the novel was largely written before his passion for Sophie began, though there is no doubt that something of the experience found its way into the novel. Rousseau confirms that for a period, when the book was already well advanced, his imagination tended to conflate Sophie and his Julie. He also conceded that he lent its hero "the virtues and flaws I felt in myself" (*Collected Writings*, V. 362). But in relating the passionate intensity with which he plunged into the writing of the book, Rousseau makes it clear that the real stuff of the story was his invention out of fantasy of characters he could love:

> Everyone was persuaded that one could not so vividly express feelings one had not experienced at all, nor depict the raptures of love this way except after one's own heart. In this they were right, and it is certain that I wrote this novel in the most burning ecstasies; but they were wrong when they thought that real objects were needed to produce them; they were far from conceiving how empassioned I can become for imaginary beings. (*Collected Writings*, V. 458)

But he adds that, since this public misperception was useful, he did nothing to dispel it.

The story is set in the northeastern quadrant of Lake Leman (or Lake Geneva), just beyond the region extending from Geneva to Lausanne, which was familiar to Rousseau in his youth. In the first half it is centered in the town of Vevey (the title's "small town at the foot of the Alps"), which is on the lake, and in the second half in the smaller town of Clarens a bit further east. This locality had not just nostalgic but also symbolic value to Rousseau, since it faced the kingdom of Savoie across the lake and thus embodied a contrast of the two polities and by inference a third—France—which was to absorb Savoie in 1860. He relates this choice, in the *Confessions*, to a tour of the lake that he made in 1754:

> I went to Vevey to take lodging at La Clef, and during the two days I stayed there without seeing anyone I acquired a love for that City which has followed me in all my travels, and which finally caused me to settle the Heroes of my novel there. I would willingly say to those who have some taste and who are sensitive, Go to Vevey, visit the country, look over the landscape, take an excursion on the lake, and say whether nature has not made this fine country for a Julie, a Claire, and a St. Preux; but do not look for them there. (*Collected Writings*, V. 128)

Implicitly in the background was also Rousseau's longtime attachment to a woman who came from this region, Mme de Warens, who had fled her husband and obtained a divorce in Savoie by converting to Catholicism. The religious frontier crossing the lake was as important as the political one, but less attention is drawn to it in the novel. Adjacent to this small area, which is in the Vaud, lies the Valais, a deep and isolated valley run-

ning up the Rhone from the eastern tip of the lake to and beyond Sion, its capital, which is as far as the plot of *Julie* follows it.[4] The travel range of the principal female characters is no greater than Geneva and Clarens; that of Bomston, in contrast, stretches from London to Rome, Wolmar's from Russia and throughout Europe, and St. Preux's spans the globe.

Julie has, in terms of its genesis, close connections to the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* (February 1758) and to *Emile* (1762), the imminence of which is clear from discussions of domesticity and childraising in parts IV and V of *Julie*. A first version in four parts was finished by late 1757 and the final six-part version in late 1758; meanwhile, Rousseau wrote the *Letter to M. d'Alembert*. His title all along was *Julie*, to which he later added *ou la moderne Héloïse*, and only as the typesetting was under way in early 1760 did he change this to *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse*.[5] From this point until the publication a year later he designed the full title as an amalgam of two parts, the first being *Julie or the New Heloise* and the second, *Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*. Rousseau was highly specific about the layout of the title page, as he was about the rather curious decision to separate these two titles and place *Julie or the New Heloise* on a separate half-title page, perhaps in order to leave more space for the epigraph, which also was important to him.[6] In fact, the name *Julie* dominates that page, being in significantly larger type than "*or the New Heloise*"; he nonetheless asked that the running head "Letters of Two Lovers" be changed to "The New Heloise," and this was done.[7]

This fluctuation with respect to the title is further evident in the matter of the long "second preface" or "*Préface dialoguée*": when he informs Rey, his publisher, about it in order to specify that he will not include it in the first printing, he refers to it as *Preface to Julie*[8]; it was published separately under the name *Preface to the New Heloise: or Conversation on Novels*, yet its *Notice* begins: "This dialogue or conversation was first intended to serve as preface to the *Letters of Two Lovers*." It would seem that Rousseau was not himself uncomfortable with multiple appellations, or that he was ambivalent about which one to favor. The reason *Letters of Two Lovers* holds equal footing in this contest is that Rousseau was eager to steer away from the word "novel"; he refers frequently in the dialogue preface, for example, to "these letters." And his ambivalence or hesitation is reflected in references of his contemporaries. One of the first press notices, going by the title page alone, lists the book as *Letters of Two Lovers*, but the extensive summary given in the following issue instead uses the half title *Julie or the New Heloise*.[9] In another journal, all three installments of summary and extracts

appear under the sole title *Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*.[10]

From early on, the book was frequently referred to as "The New Heloise" rather than *Julie*, but the preponderance is hardly overwhelming. In the *Confessions*, where Rousseau talks about it most, he calls it "La Nouvelle Héloïse" five times, "Héloïse" in five other instances, but "Julie" in fifteen.[11] While the publisher Rey almost invariably says *Julie*, the many enthusiastic readers who wrote to Rousseau when the novel appeared (and this is the first novel we have in France the reactions to which are so copiously documented) use all three designations, indeed often more than one in a single letter; so does Rousseau in his own letters, though the most frequent seems to be *Julie*. In short, while allusion to *Julie* by means of its subtitle was frequent, nothing at all suggests that "La Nouvelle Héloïse" had become in the eyes of either Rousseau or his public anything like its true, unique, and definitive title. Yet that is what it has been wrongly considered for most of the time since.

The first revision, which was ultimately to exercise an extended influence, was the introduction in 1764, in the editions bearing the Duchesne imprint (Neufchâtel and Paris) of the words "La Nouvelle Héloïse" at the beginning of the title page, and for this reason putting an "ou" *after* it and before "Lettres de deux amants." These modified title pages were nonetheless all still accompanied by the half title *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse*[12]; even so, the change was surely not made with Rousseau's permission. Indeed he was generally quite clear about matters he had decided upon; the same 1764 editions, for example, replaced Gravelot's twelfth engraving with a new one of Julie falling into the water ("L'amour maternel"), which Rousseau found grotesque.[13] Subsequently, when the half title was dropped in a collected edition of Rousseau's works,[14] imitations of this title page beginning "La Nouvelle Héloïse ou" were left, as it were, exposed; and so it happened that by erosion *Julie*'s main title more frequently (but still almost exclusively in collected editions) appeared as simply "La Nouvelle Héloïse."[15] All of the other 113 editions or re-emissions between 1761 and 1800 bear *Julie* before "La Nouvelle Héloïse" on their half title or title page.[16]

The most egregious act of emendation was perpetrated by the English translator William Kenrick, who renamed the heroine Eloisa—this being, as he laconically assures in his preface, "a matter of no importance to the reader"—and changed the title to *Eloisa* pure and simple.[17] Julie thus disappears and the metaphor replaces the character. Restitution was made in Edinburgh in 1773, in an otherwise only somewhat modified Kenrick trans-

lation, under the restored title *Julia: or, The New Eloisa*. The *Eloisa* version was reissued fifteen or so times in England between 1761 and 1810, and even taken up again in a reprint by Woodstock Books of Oxford in 1989.

The principal factor in this drift of the title was probably the fact that *Julie* would have seemed a disconcertingly lightweight title by contemporary practice. It was one thing to call a work *Memoirs of the Count de Comminge* (by Mme de Tencin) or *La Princesse de Clèves*, and something else again to give it a name unknown to readers, much less a simple first name. Marivaux's *Life of Marianne* (1731) was aggressively anonymous, but its title continued with the fuller justification *or the Adventures of Madame the Countess de* ***—that is, *someone*. La Chaussée created a small sensation in 1741 by entitling a play simply *Mélanide*: this was a woman's name, obviously enough, but it didn't *mean* anything, didn't bring any information along with it.[18] *Medea* is one thing and *Mélanide* another. It is not hard to see that the title *Julie* was in this sense wholly unconventional and would have appeared to lack the ballast necessary for such a massive book.

This is certainly what Rousseau in part intended: the simplicity of *Julie* suggested the pristine Alpine virtues echoed in the assertively modest anonymity of its other title, *Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*. But that is also why he added a *subtitle* that, on the contrary, is heavily invested with meaning: it brings with it the whole weight of a century-long fascination with Abelard and Heloise, a mound of plays and poems and other adaptations of their sorrows.[19] "The New Heloise" is as powerful and substantial as "Julie" is slight; after the two modest syllables of *Julie*,[20] it stakes a claim to grandeur, resonates in six syllables (a classical hemistich) that announce: this is an Heloise for our times, a *modern* Heloise.

It was the association with Heloise, one so much more imposing for a reader of 1761 than today, that made the label redolent of scandal. Pierre Abelard (1079–1142) was one of the most outstanding intellectuals of the twelfth century, and his tragic love with his pupil, the brilliant Heloise (who died in 1164), had long been legendary when Rousseau wrote his novel. After they had a child, they secretly married; but when Heloise's guardian uncle had Abelard castrated in vengeance, they separated at Abelard's insistence, both finally to join religious orders. After many years Abelard wrote an account of their sufferings, and this initiated an exchange of letters between the two in which Heloise in particular poured out her frustrated longing and passion for her husband.[21] The publication of the Latin text of their letters (*Historia calamitatum*) in 1616 spawned a fascination with them that lasted two centuries, until finally in 1817 their supposed remains were removed from the Paraclet abbey, which Abelard

founded and Heloise had headed, to a neo-gothic tomb in the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris. Numerous translations and adaptations of their letters in both French and English appeared in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. Probably the most pertinent of these to Rousseau's own acquaintance with the legend was Pope's poem *Eloisa to Abelard* (1717), via its translation into French by Colardeau in 1758,[22] just at the time Rousseau was writing *Julie*.

Just once in the text of the novel is Julie compared to Heloise (letter IV. XIII). But the choice of "the New Heloise" as subtitle of course gave a much greater importance to this comparison than would this mere aside. Abelard and Heloise are also discussed early in the novel (letter I. XXIV) in a way that makes the parallel with Rousseau's protagonists implicit. His story is by no means an imitation of theirs, but there is a double analogy between the two couples both in that Abelard was first Heloise's tutor, and in that they then ultimately separated and devoted their lives to higher ideals. The subtitle thus hints at a story of both lust and redemption: for some, doubtless, referring to the book simply as "Héloïse" or "La Nouvelle Héloïse" could function as a sign of assent to the author's invitation to see in his heroine the modern embodiment of great and tragic passion and spiritual glory. "The New Heloise" both enshrines Heloise as the quintessential model for feminine passion and abdication, and beatifies Julie by making of her a reincarnation of the paradigm; it becomes the romantic apotheosis of *Julie*.

There were at times, however, less admiring connotations at work in such substitution. Voltaire uses "New Heloise" precisely because to him the book is so trivial as to make its pretentious connection with the medieval legend inherently burlesque. This goes hand in hand with his sarcasm about Julie's Swiss nobility and the supposed superiority of Helvetic values in general.[23] Similar motivations lay behind *The New Heloise Revealed* by one Milon,[24] who also disparages both protagonists, and like Voltaire identifies the author himself—for whom he also uses such unambiguous epithets as "clever charlatan"—as "the loveable hero of the new Heloise." The moral anthologist Formey had something different in mind when he published *The Spirit of Julie*. He wanted to serve the didactic purposes informing the novel by disentangling them from the seductive and ambiguous matrix in which Rousseau had enmeshed them. His book is in fact an expurgated *Julie*, or rather an extracted and partially amended one, a quintessence of right thinking. Milon expresses this intention precisely in terms of a contrast between the title's two components: "We needed an imitable *Julie* and one worthy of imitation: the *New Heloise*, on the contrary, is inimitable, and unworthy of imitation."[25] To him, what is promi-

nent about the Heloise association is apparently not its prestige and tragic grandeur but its dangerous seductivity, so what he offers the reader is precisely Julie without Heloise, an angel liberated from her sinful sponsor.

When academic histories of literature, and along with them books and articles devoted specifically to *Julie*, made their appearance around 1890, "The New Heloise" had long been definitively ensconced as the novel's title. None of the great literary historians of the age, Brunetière,[26] Doumic,[27] or Lanson,[28] ever informs the reader that Rousseau wrote a work named *Julie*, although that is often used as a sort of nickname. Le Breton in an eighty-page chapter on it mentions the title *Julie* only once: "Saint-Preux fell in love with his pupil, Julie d'Étange, as formerly Abelard had loved Heloise; whence the subtitle, *Julie or the New Heloise*"[29]; in truth, however, the word "subtitle" in this sentence doesn't faze him a bit; in real terms it is not considered a subtitle and never functions as such. Moreover, when the famous literary historian Gustave Lanson, in an article on Rousseau for *La Grande Encyclopédie*, makes a point of giving the "full" title, it comes out as "The *New Heloise*, or *Letters of Two Lovers Who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps*"![30] Julie has, in the most formal way, no place in the title at all; clearly Lanson himself had never checked to see what the book's real title was. His successor Daniel Mornet in his countless pages devoted to *Julie* never calls it anything other than "La Nouvelle Héloïse," even on the title page of his epochal four-volume edition of 1925, which greatly contributed to the re-establishment of the novel's standing, even though he included facsimiles of the original title pages, which should have shown how glaring the mistake was.

If scholars and critics continue such a practice in our day, it is because the evidence has become almost invisible. The sanctification of "The New Heloise" is so entire that Bernard Guyon, annotator of the now-standard Pléiade edition on which this translation is based, could not fathom what could have come over Rousseau the day he offered to his protectrice, the Maréchale de Luxembourg, a manuscript copy that, as Guyon sees it, "does not yet bear the famous title, but only the subtitle."[31] To him this copy, *Julie or Letters of Two Lovers*, lacks a title, *Julie* being merely a sort of *pre*title; for Rousseau to do this amounts to mystification. A less prepossessed investigator might draw rather different conclusions. Naturally, Guyon's own edition has no *Julie* on its title page; the recent Folio edition[32] does, but not on its cover. The title *Julie* was rarely if ever used in any scholarly title until recently, and references to it in any index written before 1980 are sure to be found under "N" and not "J." But it is time such practices cease.

Another but much smaller myth adheres to the hyphen traditionally in-

serted into a name that Rousseau always writes as "St. Preux."[33] In fact, like most hyphens in proper names, it was an innovation of the early nineteenth century.[34] Does it matter? In a subtle way, it does: "Saint-Preux" is a name and "St. Preux" is a saint, albeit a playfully fictive one. And it matters connotatively that he is not *Monsieur Saint-Preux*—in the first half of the novel he can't be a *Monsieur* by any measure—but *St. Preux*, interpret that as one may.[35]

Though it was an immediate best-seller throughout Europe, *Julie* has always been controversial. A long tradition has it that the literary world of Rousseau's day was hostile to it despite its universal acclaim in all other quarters. The truth is less schematic, and as Rousseau himself judiciously puts it, "Feelings were divided among the literary people"; he goes on to say, "but in society, there was only one opinion, and above all women were intoxicated by both the Book and the author" (*Collected Writings*, V. 456). Much of the criticism was moral and centered on Julie's conduct in part I, corresponding most dramatically to the subtitle's allusion to Heloise. Others objected to the characters, the "digressions," the style. Even the style, however, was sublime to some and overinflated to others. Certainly the letters are not written with the unstudied simplicity claimed for them in the prefaces. Rousseau was a great stylist in the classical mode; his models were largely ancient and rhetorical, and this shows whichever character is speaking. Furthermore, the fact that they all share certain fundamental values and attitudes adds to the similarity of their writing, despite their personal differences.

As an epistolary novel and purportedly an authentic exchange of letters, it well exceeds at times the bounds of plausibility: in the second half the letters become implausibly long, averaging 8.4 pages in part VI after starting out at 2.4 pages in part I; five letters run to 25 pages or more and the longest (letter VI. XI) stretches to 37. In Rousseau's own retrospective, the novel's primary attraction was what he calls "the subtleties of heart of which this work is full" (*Collected Writings*, V. 457), but he proudly cites several of its other qualities having to do with its simplicity of structure and the goodness of its characters:

> The thing that people have noticed least in it and which will always make it a unique work is the simplicity of the subject and the chain of interest which, being concentrated among three people, is maintained for six volumes without episode, without romantic adventure, without wickedness of any sort, either in the characters, or in the actions. (*Collected Writings*, V. 457)

What this summary, while true, hides is that there are many small engines driving the action and characterization; if there are no "romantic adven-

tures," there are many dramas and a couple of quite major ones. Like the contemporary theatrical *drame*, situated between tragedy and comedy, *Julie* is based not only on positive moral values but on the conviction that private and domestic life, far from being vapid and tedious as the aristocracy assumed, was full of tension and power. Rousseau has not often enough been credited with the construction of a plot that is for its time exceptionally coherent and chronologically consistent; all the main developments and many minor ones are subtly foreshadowed. And there is indeed as much inconspicuous versatility in the style as in the subject matter; practically every purpose that a letter can serve, practically every modality of expression finds a place in this work.

A major reason for the interest taken in, and the criticism of, *Julie* was that its author had lengthily denounced the pernicious influence of literature; here was the work of a novelist who decried novels, even in his prefaces to this one. This smacked of provocation, of willful paradox if not hypocrisy. The prefaces attempt, but with highly dubious clarity, to rationalize this paradox: "My means have changed, but not my purpose" (p. 12), declares the "editor." His didactic intentions are hardly in doubt; besides the paramount theme of virtue, which is their moral obsession, the characters' very digressiveness enables them to bring into the subject matter extensive discussion of a number of social and moral questions (mendicancy and suicide, for instance) and significant theoretical approaches to agrarian economy and child education. On another level, Rousseau hoped, according to a letter written shortly after publication, to mediate in the doctrinal conflicts of the time by incarnating virtue in characters who also had serious weaknesses and even in one who was an unbeliever: his "objective was to narrow the gap between the opposing parties through mutual esteem, to teach the philosophes that one can believe in God without being a hypocrite, and believers that one can be an unbeliever without being a rascal."[36]

The sources of Rousseau's thought and poetic inspiration are evident through the many allusions and quotations: in particular the Bible, Italian poets of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Petrarch, Metastasio, Tasso, Marini), Plutarch. From the moment of its appearance it was compared and contrasted with the novels of Samuel Richardson, particularly *Clarissa*[37]; many critics expressed in letters or reviews, and at length, why in their view one was better than the other. Such a comparison was inevitable. There is no question that Rousseau owes something to *Clarissa*, which he had read in Antoine Prévost's translation of 1751, both in the epistolary form of the two novels, and in substance and tone, since Rousseau shares Richardson's obsession with virtue, virginity, and passion. In a

number of details Rousseau seems to have recalled and appropriated ideas found in *Clarissa*. But their plots have little in common, and no one should imagine that either in its conception or its execution *Julie* is in any sense a reworking of *Clarissa*.

No one has ever doubted that *Julie* was a *roman à thèse*, a vehicle for communication of a system of thought; Rousseau discusses his purposes at length in the second preface. But at the same time, we know from the *Confessions* that he began writing the letters that make it up as a sort of lyrical exercise in self-consolation; he set out to create, as he put it, characters with whom he would like to live. Nor does he deny that he put all his art into them as well. Far from being straightforward, as its identification as a "moral" novel would imply, it is a subtle and complex fabric of many subjects and motivations, and from the outset many contested whether even the plot actually illustrated what Rousseau pretended. As Ralph Leigh has written, *Julie*

> is first and foremost a novel: it is about human beings locked into a number of intractable situations, which drive them to the verge of nervous collapse, and, indeed, sometimes beyond. These situations involve five different people, most of them continually developing, expressing not only the immediacy of their reactions, but also constantly interpreting and reinterpreting their experiences (sometimes wrongly), sometimes contradicting one another, sometimes saying what they think and sometimes not, converted in the course of the work to values very different in many ways from those with which they began.[38]

Rousseau takes a deliberately simple plot and makes it complex in detail, infusing it with tension as well as emotion, and drawing it out over a time span such that the reader experiences the duration. That his characters do not merely "illustrate" a thesis is a reflection of their aesthetic authenticity, as embodying a human truth and density that cannot be reduced to a system of springs and levers, even moral ones; and to that extent, it is also a reflection of the author's integrity in refusing to reduce them to a single dimension, even in the service of a moral imperative.

Among *Julie*'s qualities, aside from the enormous variety of subject matter it encompasses, is the extensive and subtle exploitation of the epistolary medium. There are all sorts of letters—declarations of passion, letters of reproach, requests and supplications, outpourings of joy and of grief—and, though they sometimes become implausibly long in the second half, Rousseau never forgets that every fact and feeling passes through the agency of the letter. The letters here are not dated, but their sequence is usually pretty clear, and account is always taken of the time and means by which letters, particularly secret ones, must be transmitted. Moreover, Rousseau never forgets that the essence of correspondence is *exchange*:

that the characters write not for or to themselves, but to influence, move, and reply to each other. They cherish letters, reread and even memorize them; they *answer* each other in detail, in the process constantly referring to and frequently quoting the others' letters, so that the discussion often rebounds from letter to letter with signals given by allusion to particular words or phrases that have occurred previously. There are myriad echoes within the letters which, coupled with the work's thematic richness, reward close reading.

Certainly this type of novel demands something of the reader, who must adapt to a novelistic aesthetics quite different from those of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Length was one of its characteristics; the reader needs to be unhurried and to accept its slow rhythms on their own terms (though hardly short, *Julie* is only a third as long as *Clarissa*!). Similarly, the reader needs to savor or at least indulge its effusiveness, accepting the fact that it belongs to an aesthetics of tears and pathos, being contemporaneous with the birth of *drame* and the moral painting of Greuze and Fragonard. But it is just these aspects of Rousseau's novel that were extraordinarily original in the context of the worldly novels of his time, and that gave it such extraordinary impact, opening future paths to Benjamin de Saint-Pierre (*Paul et Virginie*, 1787) and the great Romantic novelists of frustrated passion: Manzoni (*I Promessi Sposi*, 1827), Stendhal (*Le Rouge et le Noir*, 1830; *La Chartreuse de Parme*, 1839).

From Rousseau's time through the end of the Victorian era, *Julie*'s reputation was tainted both by the moral objections that had been raised in France and by the umbrage taken, especially in England, at everything relating to Rousseau for having been one of the supposed causes of the Revolution of 1789. As one eloquent modern representative of this tradition, John Lord, makes clear, *Julie* is all the worse for its great qualities, which only make of it an insidious, indeed almost demonic, piece of writing:

> In Rousseau's "New Heloise" there are the same contradictions, the same paradoxes, the same unsoundness as in his other works, but it is more eloquent than any. It is a novel in which he paints all the aspirations of the soul, all its unrest, all its indefinite longings, its raptures, and its despair; in which he unfetters the imagination and sanctifies every impulse, not only of affection, but of passion. This novel was the pioneer of the sentimental romances which rapidly followed in France and England and Germany,—worse than our sensational literature, since the author veiled his immoralities by painting the transports of passion under the guise of love, which ever has its seat in the affections and is sustained only by respect. Here Rousseau was a disguised seducer, a poisoner of the moral sentiments, a foe to what is most sacred; and he was the more dangerous from his irresistible eloquence. His sophistries in regard to political and social rights may be met by reason, but not his attacks on the heart with his imaginary sorrows and joys, his painting of raptures which can never be found. Here he undermines virtue as he

had undermined truth and law. Here reprobation must become unqualified, and he appears one of the very worst men who ever exercised a commanding influence on a wicked and perverse generation.[39]

Clearly such a critic did not mean to encourage us to investigate and decide for ourselves. The fact that *Julie* has been all but unobtainable in English since has meant that even most critics have known it solely by reputation. It is time the opportunity be offered for a return to the source, or as nearly so as translation allows. Rousseau's own recommendation to his reader was this: "Don't even think of the Author as you read, and without any bias either in favor or against, let your soul experience the impressions it will receive. You will thus assure yourself of the intention behind the writing of these books and of whether they can be the work of a scoundrel who was harboring evil designs."[40]

Philip Stewart

JULIE,

OU

LA NOUVELLE HELOÏSE.

TOME PREMIER.

LETTRES

DE DEUX AMANS,

Habitans d'une petite Ville
au pied des Alpes.

RECUEILLIES ET PUBLIÉES

PAR J. J. ROUSSEAU.

PREMIERE PARTIE.

A AMSTERDAM,
Chez MARC MICHEL REY.
MDCCLXI.

Note on the Translation

The French translation struck us as energetic, and sublime; but no one in France has so far taken the Translator to task over faithfulness and accuracy. That is nonetheless the first quality of the translation of a Work of this sort.[41]

So I have come to a decision here: I will try to decipher his intentions, then use the terms most familiar to us. If I am mistaken, too bad: the story remains the same.[42]

This is the first integral translation of *Julie* since William Kenrick did one in very short order in the early months of 1761, immediately after *Julie*'s publication in French. It was the basis for all English editions, the last one being in 1810.

Kenrick obliterated Rousseau's architectonics: in the place of *Julie*'s six parts, with new numbering of the letters in each one, he or his publisher redistributed the letters into four volumes and numbered them sequentially from one end to the other. Even more seriously, he transformed a metaphor for Julie (who is once, in the text, compared to Heloise) into her *name*, the translation assuming the title *Eloisa: Or, a Series of Original Letters Collected and Published by J. J. Rousseau*.

Kenrick's style is by itself attractive and often colorful; he certainly understood the language well, and we have been able to take some cues from him on terms current in the English of his time. But like all translators of that period, he did not hesitate to rephrase, expand, or contract sentences of which he disliked the sound or gist, for example routinely adding epithets to nouns that Rousseau used unqualified. He often expanded sentences or, contrariwise, skipped whole clauses. (Kenrick's preface stated that "M. Rousseau writes with great elegance, but he sometimes wants propriety of thought, and accuracy of expression.") From a translator's point of view, he frequently sidestepped thorny problems of equivalency or substituted something he found simpler or more congenial. Sometimes expansive, on the other hand, he added his own flourishes, so that

Ah, si tu savais quel pire tourment c'est de rester quand on se sépare, combien tu préférerais ton état au mien? [Ah, if you knew how much worse a torment it is to

stay behind when lovers separate, how much you would prefer your state to mine!] (I, xxv)

becomes:

Did you but know what endless pangs these fruitless expectations, these impatient longings perpetually occasion, how they embitter and increase the torments I already feel, you would without hesitation prefer your condition to mine.

Kenrick's translation remains as a model of successful adaptation, insofar as he makes it sound as if the original were written in English. But fidelity and accuracy are not his primary concerns.

The principles of the present translation are easily stated, although necessarily complex in their application. Accuracy being our most important objective, we have attempted to stay as close as reasonably possible to the vocabulary and sentence structure of the original, all the more so because particular terms often connect the reader with themes present in his other works, and because he was a precise as well as an elegant writer with an exceptional sense of prose cadence. Accordingly, we have tried wherever possible to use consistent English renderings for his own frequently used and thematically important words.

There are nonetheless numerous words common in his text that will not admit of a univocal English substitution. Anyone with a smattering of French will know of some commonplace but still sometimes thorny ambiguities concerning the meaning of such words as *fille* (which can mean maiden, girl, or daughter) and *femme* (wife or woman). There are any number of situations in which one of these languages possesses two or more words where the other has just one. In French there are *larmes* and *pleurs* for tears, and so forth, which makes one often wish that more subtle options were available in the "target" language. But in the present situation the reverse case is even more problematic. *Ennui* might be chagrin or boredom; *mœurs* might be customs or moral standards, or even virtuous conduct. Similarly, *sagesse* in French can mean either wisdom or morally correct (or just socially proper) conduct. In such a case a translator has to choose, and make the right choice for real accuracy of meaning. Our renderings have to be context-specific, and this entails both some risk and occasional sacrifice of multiple resonance, for semantic echoes are never identical in two languages. In the many cases where we could not reasonably use a single same-word equivalency throughout, we have tried at least to restrict the range of words used.

Although we have not attempted to imitate eighteenth-century English, we have hoped to respect the period flavor to a certain degree; we

have eschewed very modern-sounding words and retained a few slight archaisms. We have, for example, used "transport(s)" for its French cognate because it is used so often, was a perfectly valid word in eighteenth-century English, and has no better modern equivalent. Another oddity the reader will encounter, but to which we expect he or she will soon adjust, is the prevalence of certain obstinate but (in English) awkward metaphors that we would not presume to change. The conventions of love language, for example, are rather particular in classical French and often depend upon the analogy of love to fire, whereas in English terms like "flame," though a remnant of the same tradition, now frequently have diminutive connotations. "Heart" and "soul," too, are much commoner in French classical discourse on love and morality than would seem natural in English, but it would be inexcusable for us to make arbitrary changes in them for only that reason. We have established a glossary for the commonest terms whose eighteenth-century meanings differed somewhat from their current ones.[43]

It is unfortunate not to have available today a convenient stylistic device to indicate the second-person distinction between *tu* and *vous*, as English once did with "thou" and "you." To translate *tu* as "thou," however, would have obligated us to write long passages in the "thou" form, a style far from natural (or perhaps even tolerable) to today's reader; in fact, its rarity probably makes "thou" seem more formal now, whereas etymologically it should imply greater intimacy. Thus, we have had recourse to "thou" only in a few highly poetic instances—in particular, for prosopopeia. In the same vein, we have for poetic reasons occasionally personified such words as "reason" and "nature" in abstract apostrophes because they are feminine nouns in French. In one exceptional instance, the end of letter VI. XII, we have introduced the "thou" form to help convey the dramatic impact of Julie's sudden reversion to *tu* after so many years at the very end of her last letter.

Deciding what text to use with *Julie* presents few problems, for although Rousseau made several copies of it by hand and frequently added marginal comments to them, he did not have these introduced into the printed versions; and what few changes he actually made in the printed text he subsequently recanted, later declaring that the first edition was the only valid one. Thus, though many possible variants can be cited in editorial notes, there is general agreement on the authority of the original Amsterdam edition of 1761, and in consequence the editions established by modern scholars are all virtually identical. As in the other volumes in this series, we are following the text of the Pléiade edition, in this case one established by

Henri Coulet (*Oeuvres complètes*, Gallimard, II, 1961), with only occasional corrections based on an amended text by Henri Coulet in the "Folio" collection (Gallimard, 1993).

In keeping with this choice, and with the Pléiade policy of respecting Rousseau's sometimes erratic spelling and punctuation, we have retained capitalization where Rousseau uses it and stayed as close as translation allows to his punctuation.

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Philip Stewart
Jean Vaché

Notes on the Text and Engravings

Rousseau's own notes to *Julie* are designated by asterisks. Notes marked by arabic numerals are those of the translators.

Works of Rousseau that have appeared in the first five volumes of the *Collected Writings* are so referenced; all other references are to the Pléiade *Oeuvres complètes* in five volumes (Paris: Gallimard, 1959–1995).

The following translations are referred to in the notes by the translator's last name only.

Bloom, Allan, trans. Rousseau, *Emile or On Education*. New York: Basic Books, 1979.

Butterworth, Charles E., trans. Rousseau, *The Reveries of the Solitary Walker*. New York: New York University Press, 1979.

Durling, Robert M., trans. *Petrarch's Lyric Poems*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1976.

Frame, Donald M., trans. *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1958.

North, Thomas, trans. Plutarch, *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romans*. Oxford: B. Blackwell, 1928.

The twelve illustrations prescribed by Rousseau were originally printed and released in Paris separately from the text, which was published in Amsterdam, but inscribed to correspond to specific pages in that edition, and accompanied by Rousseau's descriptions furnished to the artist, which are reproduced in our appendix II. They were drawn by Hubert-François Bourguignon, alias Gravelot (1699–1773), one of the most prominent illustrators of his time, and engraved by Noël Le Mire (1, 5, 11, 12), Jean Ouvrier (2, 10), Louis Lempereur (3), Augustin de Saint Aubin (4), Jacques Aliamet (6), Pierre Philippe Choffard (7, 8), and Jean Jacques Flipart (9). The original drawings were bound into a hand copy of the novel made by Rousseau for the Maréchale de Luxembourg, now in the library of the Assemblée Nationale. Rousseau's own proofs of them were given by him to George Simon Harcourt, Viscount Nuneham (1736–1809), in February 1767 and are still in the family, at the Manor House at Stanton Harcourt: they were exhibited for the first time at the Voltaire Foundation in Oxford in October 1995, with a catalogue by Ann-Marie Thornton.

JULIE,

OR

THE NEW HELOISE

LETTERS
OF TWO LOVERS
Who Live in a Small Town
at the Foot of the Alps

Collected and Published by
JEAN-JACQUES ROUSSEAU

Non la conobbe il mondo, mentre l'ebbe:
Connobil'io ch'a pianger qui rimasi.
Petrarch[1]

The world did not know her while she was here:
I knew her, I who remain alone here to weep.

Preface

Great cities must have theaters; and corrupt peoples, Novels. I have seen the morals of my times, and I have published these letters. Would I had lived in an age when I should have thrown them into the fire!

Although I bear only the title of Editor here, I have myself had a hand in this book, and I do not disguise this. Have I done the whole thing, and is the entire correspondence a fiction? Worldly people, what matters it to you? It is surely a fiction for you.

Every honorable man must acknowledge the books he publishes. I therefore put my name at the head of this collection, not to appropriate it, but to be answerable for it. If it contains evil, let it be imputed to me; if good, I do not plan to boast of it. If the book is bad, I am all the more obliged to own it: I do not wish to be thought better than I am.

As for the truth of the facts, I declare that having been several times in the country of the two lovers, I have never there heard mention of the Baron d'Étange or his daughter, nor Monsieur d'Orbe, nor Milord Edward Bomston, nor Monsieur de Wolmar. I also serve notice that the topography is clumsily distorted in several places; either the better to mislead the reader, or because the author indeed knew it no better than that. That is all I can say. Let everyone think what he will.[2]

This book is not meant to circulate in society, and is suitable for very few readers. The style will put off people of taste; the contents will alarm strict people; all the sentiments will be unnatural to those who do not believe in virtue. It is bound to displease the devout, the libertines, the philosophers: it is bound to shock gallant women, and scandalize honest ones. Whom then will it please? Perhaps no one but me: but very certainly it will please no one moderately.

Anyone who is willing to undertake the reading of these letters must summon his patience with respect to language mistakes, trite and bombastic style, banal thoughts expressed in turgid terms; he must tell himself in advance that their writers are not French, wits, academicians,[3] philosophers; but provincials, foreigners, solitary youths, almost children, who in their romantic imaginations mistake the honest ravings of their brains for philosophy.

Why should I fear to speak my mind? This collection with its gothic[4] aura is better suited to women than books of philosophy. It may even prove useful to those who in their dissolute lives have preserved some love for honesty. As for maidens, that is another matter. Never did a chaste maiden read Novels; and I have affixed to this one a sufficiently clear title[5] so that upon opening it anyone would know what to expect. She who, de-

spite this title, dares to read a single page of it, is a maiden undone: but let her not attribute her undoing to this book; the harm was already done. Since she has begun, let her finish reading: she has nothing more to risk.

Should an austere man leafing through this collection be put off by the early parts, throw the book down in anger, and rail at the Editor, I will not complain of his injustice; in his place, I might have done the same. But should anyone, after reading it all the way through, dare censure me for publishing it; let him proclaim it to the world if he pleases, but let him not come tell me: I feel that I could never in my life have any regard for such a man.

Preface of the New Heloise[6] or Conversation about Novels between the Editor and a Man of Letters

NOTICE

This Dialogue or supposed Conversation was originally intended to serve as the Preface to the Letters of the two Lovers.[7] But its form and its length having permitted me to place only an excerpt at the head of the collection,[8] I give it here in its entirety, in the hope that the reader will find some useful views about the purpose of this sort of Writings. I thought moreover that I should wait until the Book had made its impact before discussing its good and bad points, not wishing to harm the bookseller, nor solicit the Public's indulgence.

Second Preface

N.[9] Here's your manuscript. I have read it all the way through.

R. All the way through? I see: you expect few will do the same?

N. *Vel duo, vel nemo*.

R. *Turpe et miserabile*.[10] But I want a straightforward judgment.

N. I dare not.

R. You have dared everything with that single word. Explain yourself.

N. My judgment depends on the answer you are going to give me. Is this correspondence real, or is it a fiction?

R. I don't see that it matters. To say whether a Book is good or bad, how does it matter how it came to be written?

N. It matters a great deal for this one. A Portrait always has some value provided it is a good likeness, however strange the Original. But in a Tableau based on imagination, each human figure must possess features common to mankind, or else the Tableau is worthless. Even if we allow that both are good, there remains a difference, which is that the Portrait is of interest to few People; the Tableau alone can please the Public.

R. I follow you. If these Letters are Portraits, they are of no interest; if they are Tableaux, they are poor imitations. Is that not it?

N. Precisely.

R. This way, I will extract your answers from you before you have answered me. Besides, since I cannot adequately respond to your question, you must resolve mine unaided. Assume the worst case: my Julie.....

N. Oh! if only she had existed!

R. What then?

N. But surely it's no more than a fiction.

R. Suppose it is.

N. In that case, I've never seen such a bad piece of work. These Letters are no Letters; this Novel is no Novel; the characters are people from the other world.[11]

R. Then I am sorry for this one.

N. Take comfort; fools are not wanting there either; but yours are not in nature.

R. I might..... No, I see the turn your curiosity is taking. Why do you decide it so? Do you know how vastly Men differ from each other? How opposite characters can be? To what degree morals, prejudices vary with the times, places, eras? Who is daring enough to assign exact limits to Nature, and assert: Here is as far as Man can go, and no further?

N. With such fine reasoning, unheard-of Monsters, Giants, Pygmies, fantasies of all kinds, anything could be specifically included in nature:

everything would be disfigured; we would no longer have any common model! I repeat, in Tableaux of humankind, Man must be recognizable to everyone.

R. I agree, provided one also knows how to distinguish what constitutes variations from what is essential to the species. What would you say of those who could recognize our own only in French costume?

N. What would you say of someone who, depicting neither features nor shape, presumed to paint a human figure with a veil for raiment? Wouldn't one be entitled to ask him where the man is?

R. Neither features nor shape? Are you being fair? No one is perfect: that is the fantasy. A young maiden offending the virtue she sets store by, and brought back to her duty by abhorrence of a greater crime; a too compliant friend, finally punished by her own heart for her excessive indulgence; an honest and sensible young man, full of weakness and fine words; an elderly Gentleman infatuated with his nobility, sacrificing everything to opinion; a generous and valiant Englishman, forever driven by wisdom, forever reasoning without reason.....

N. An uncomplaining and hospitable husband keen on setting up his wife's former lover in his own house....

R. I refer you to the inscription for the Engraving.*[12]

N. *The beautiful Souls*!... The beautiful phrase!

R. O Philosophy! what trouble thou dost take to shrink hearts, to make men little!

N. The spirit of romance magnifies them and deceives them. But to the point. The two women friends?... How about them?... And that sudden conversion in the Temple?... Grace, I suppose?.....

R. Monsieur.....

N. A Christian woman, a devout woman who does not instruct her children in the catechism; who dies unwilling to entreat God; whose death nonetheless edifies a Pastor, and converts an Atheist!.... Oh!...

R. Monsieur.....

N. As for the focus, it is everywhere at once, it is nil. Not a single evil deed; not a single wicked man to make us fear for the good ones. Events so natural, so simple that they are too much so; nothing unexpected; no dramatic surprises. Everything is foreseen well in advance; everything comes to pass as foreseen. Is it worth recording what anyone can see every day in his own home or in his neighbor's?

R. In other words, you must have ordinary men and exceptional events? I think I would prefer the opposite. Besides, you are judging what

* See the seventh Engraving.

you have read as one would a Novel. It is not a Novel; you said so yourself. It is a Collection of Letters...

N. Which are no Letters: I think I said that as well. What epistolary style! How stilted it is! What a profusion of exclamations! What affectations! What bombast just to convey everyday things! What big words for small ideas! Seldom any sense, any accuracy; never any discrimination, or force, or depth. Diction that is always in the clouds, and thoughts that forever crawl on the ground. If your characters are in nature, admit that their style is not very natural.

R. I admit that, given your point of view, that is the way it must seem to you.

N. Are you supposing that the Public will see it differently; and was it not my judgment you asked for?

R. I am replying to elicit a longer version of it. I see that you would rather have Letters written to be printed.

N. Such preference seems rather well founded for letters one is giving to the printer.

R. Then we shall never see men in books except as they wish to represent themselves?

N. The Author as he wishes to represent himself; those he depicts such as they are. But that advantage is still lacking here. Not a single Portrait vigorously brushed; not a single character passably delineated; no grounded observation; no knowledge of the world.[13] What does one learn in the small sphere of two or three Lovers or Friends constantly wrapped up in themselves?

R. One learns to love mankind. In large circles one learns only to hate mankind.

Your judgment is harsh; the Public's is bound to be even harsher. Without calling it unjust, I would like to tell you in turn the way I see these Letters; less to excuse the defects for which you fault them, than to discover their source.

In seclusion, one has other ways of seeing and feeling than in involvement with the world; the passions differently modified also have different expressions; the imagination, constantly encountering the same objects, is more vividly affected by them. That small number of images keeps returning, mixes with all these notions, and lends them the odd and repetitious turn one notices in the conversation of Solitary Folk. Does it then follow that their language is highly forceful? Not at all; it is merely extraordinary. It is only in the world that one learns to speak forcefully. First of all, because one must say everything differently and better than others would, and second, because being obliged at every moment to make assertions

one doesn't believe, to express sentiments one does not feel, one attempts to give what one says a persuasive turn to make up for the lack of inner persuasion. Do you believe that really impassioned people have those intense, strong, colorful ways of speaking that you admire in your Dramas and Novels? No; passion wrapped up in itself expresses itself with more profusion than power; it doesn't even try to persuade; it doesn't even suspect that anyone could mistrust it. When it says what it feels, it does so less to explain it to others than to unburden itself. Love is depicted more vividly in great cities; is it better felt there than in hamlets?

N. In other words, weakness of language proves strength of feeling?

R. Sometimes it at least reveals its truth. Read a love letter written by an Author in his study, by a wit trying to shine. If he has at least a little fire in his brain, his letter will, as we say, scorch the paper; the heat will go no farther. You will be charmed, even stirred perhaps; but with a stirring that is fleeting and arid, that will leave you nothing to remember but words. In contrast, a letter really dictated by love; a letter from a truly passionate Lover, will be desultory, diffuse, full of verbose, disconnected, repetitious passages. His heart, filled with an overflowing sentiment, ever repeats the same thing, and is never done, like a running spring that flows endlessly and never runs dry. Nothing salient, nothing remarkable; neither the words, nor the turns, nor the sentences are memorable; there is nothing in it to admire or to be struck by. And yet one feels the soul melt; one feels moved without knowing why. The strength of the sentiment may not strike us, but its truth affects us, and that is how one heart can speak to another. But those who feel nothing, those who have only the fancy jargon of the passions, are unfamiliar with beauties of this kind and disdain them.

N. Go on.

R. Very well. In this latter sort of letters, though the thoughts are commonplace, the style nonetheless is not familiar, and should not be. Love is but illusion; it fashions for itself, so to speak, another Universe; it surrounds itself with objects that do not exist, or to which it alone has given being; and as it renders all its sentiments by images, its language is always figurative.[14] But such figures lack precision and sequence; its eloquence is in its disorder; it convinces more when it reasons less. Enthusiasm is the final degree of passion. When passion is at the full, it perceives its object as perfect; makes it into its idol; places it in Heaven; and just as the enthusiasm of devoutness borrows the language of love, so does the enthusiasm of love borrow also the language of devoutness. It can see nothing but Paradise, Angels, the virtues of Saints, the delights of the celestial abode. In these transports, in the midst of such lofty images, will love evoke them in pedestrian terms? Will it bring itself to lower, to sully its ideas with vul-

gar phrases? Will it not elevate its style? Give it nobility, dignity? How can you speak of Letters, of epistolary style? When writing to one's beloved, who cares about that! It is no longer Letters one writes, but Hymns.

N. Citizen,[15] shall we check your pulse?

R. No: look at the snow on my head.[16] There is an age for experience; another for memory. Sentiment dies out in the long run; but the sensible soul always remains.

Let me return to our Letters. If you read them as the work of an Author who wishes to please, or who has pretensions of writing, they are detestable. But take them for what they are, and judge them according to their kind. Two or three simple but sensible youths discuss among themselves the interests of their hearts. It never occurs to them to shine in each other's eyes. They know and love each other too much for †susceptibility to have any further effect between them. They are children, will they think as men? They are foreigners, will they write correctly? They live in solitude,[17] will they know the world and society? Filled with the single sentiment that occupies them, they are in delirium, and think they are philosophizing. Would you have them know how to observe, judge, reflect? They know nothing of all that. They know how to love; they relate everything to their passion. Is the importance they give to their extravagant ideas less amusing than all the wit they might display? They talk about everything; they get everything wrong; they reveal nothing but themselves; but in revealing themselves, they make themselves endearing. Their errors are more worthy than the knowledge of Sages. Their honest hearts carry everywhere, even in their very faults, the prejudices of virtue, always confident and constantly betrayed. They go unheard, they go unanswered, they are disabused by everything. They avoid discouraging truths: finding nowhere what they are feeling, they turn in on themselves; they detach themselves from the rest of Creation; and inventing among themselves a little world different from ours, there they create an authentically new spectacle.

N. I allow that a man of twenty and maidens of eighteen should not, however educated, talk like Philosophers, even if they think that's what they are. I also admit, and this difference has not escaped me, that these maidens turn out to be women of merit, and this young man a better observer. I make no comparison between the beginning and the end of the work. The details of domestic life expunge the faults of an earlier age: the chaste spouse, the thoughtful woman, the worthy materfamilias[18] cause us to forget the guilty mistress. But that itself is subject to criticism: the end of the collection makes the beginning all the more reprehensible; one would say that they are two different books which the same persons should not read. Setting out to depict reasonable people, why begin at a

point where they have not yet reached that stage? The childish games that precede the lessons of wisdom dissuade the reader from waiting for them; the evil scandalizes before the good can edify; finally, indignant, he gives up and casts the book aside just when he was about to profit from it.

R. I think, on the contrary, that the end of this collection would be superfluous to readers repelled by the beginning, and that this very beginning has to be agreeable to those for whom the end can be useful. Thus, those who do not read it to the end will lose nothing, because it isn't suited to them; and those who can profit from it would not have read it had it begun more solemnly. To make what you have to say useful, first you have to get the attention of those who ought to put it to use.

My means have changed, but not my purpose. When I tried to speak to men no one listened to me; perhaps by addressing children I shall be better listened to; and children do not relish the taste of naked reason any better than that of ill-disguised medicines.

Cosí a l'egro fanciul porgiamo aspersi
Di soavi licor gl'orli del vaso:
Succhi amari ingannato intanto ei beve,
E da l'inganno suo vita riceve.[19]

Just so, in order to get a sick child to take medicine,
are we accustomed to rubbing the edge of the vessel with some sweet liquor.
He nonetheless swallows that bitter liquid,
and obtains his cure from the deception we have perpetrated.

N. I'm afraid you are again mistaken: they will lick the edges of the vessel and not drink the liquor.

R. Then it will no longer be my fault; I will have done my best to make it go down.

My young people are lovable; but to love them at thirty, you need to have known them at twenty. You need to have lived a long time with them in order to enjoy their company; and it is only after deploring their faults that you are able to appreciate their virtues. Their letters are not immediately engaging; but little by little they win you over: you can neither take them nor leave them. Grace and ease are not to be found in them, nor reason, nor wit, nor eloquence; sentiment there is, it is communicated to the heart by degrees, and it alone ultimately makes up for all the rest. It is a long ballad the stanzas of which taken separately are not at all moving, but their succession has a cumulative effect. That is what I feel when I read them: tell me whether you feel the same thing?

N. No. Yet I understand such an effect in your case. If you are the author, the effect is obvious. If you are not, I can still understand it. A man living in the world cannot accustom himself to the extravagant ideas, the

affected bathos, the continual false reasoning of your good people. A man living in solitude can appreciate them; you yourself said why. But before publishing this manuscript, don't forget that the public is not made up of Hermits. The best you can hope for would be for your little fellow to be taken for a Céladon, your Edward for a Don Quixote, your chatterboxes for two Astrées, and be laughed at like so many real madmen.[20] But prolonged madness is hardly entertaining: you have to write like Cervantes to get people to read six volumes of visions.[21]

R. The reason that would lead you to suppress this Work encourages me to publish it.

N. What! the certainty of not being read?

R. With a little patience, you will understand me.

When it comes to morality, no reading, in my view, will do worldly people any good. First, because the abundance of new books they leaf through, and which alternately state the pros and cons, destroys the effect of the former by the latter and nullifies the whole. Select books which are reread are equally ineffectual: if they support worldly maxims, they are superfluous; and if they oppose them, they are futile. They find their readers linked to social vices by chains they cannot break. The man of the world who wants his soul stirred for a moment to put it back into the moral order, encountering invincible resistance on all sides, is always forced to maintain or return to his initial situation. I am persuaded that there are few people born good who have not tried this, at least once in their lives; but soon discouraged by a vain effort, they don't repeat it, and they get used to regarding the morality of books as babble of idle people. The further one gets from the bustle, from great cities, from large gatherings, the smaller the obstacles become. There is a point where these obstacles cease to be insurmountable, and that is where books can be of some use. When one lives in isolation, since there is no hurry to read to show off one's reading, it is less varied and more meditated upon; and since it is no longer counterbalanced so strongly from without, it has a much greater effect within. Boredom, the scourge of solitude as of worldly society, obliges one to resort to entertaining books, the sole resource of the man who lives alone and has none within himself. Many more novels are read in the Provinces than in Paris, more are read in the country than in the cities, and they make a much greater impression there: you see why this must be so.

But these books that could serve the country-dweller, who is unhappy only insofar as he thinks himself so, at once for entertainment, for instruction, and for consolation, seem on the contrary designed solely to give him an aversion for his station, by extending and reinforcing the prejudice that leads him to scorn it. The smart crowd, fashionable ladies, the high

and mighty, the military: such are the actors in all your novels. The refinement of city taste, the maxims of the Court, the paraphernalia of luxury, Epicurean morality: such are the lessons they preach and the precepts they offer. The coloration of their false virtues tarnishes the luster of genuine ones; the comedy of civilities replaces real duties; fine words sow disdain for fine deeds, and the simplicity of good morals is counted as coarseness.

What effect will such depictions have on a country gentleman, who sees himself mocked for the informality with which he greets his guests, and sees the joy he spreads throughout his canton compared to a brutish orgy? Or on his wife, who learns that the cares of a materfamilias are beneath Ladies of her rank? Or on his daughter, whom the city's devious airs and jargon lead to disdain the honest and rustic neighbor she would have married? All of one mind, unwilling now to remain boors, they leave their village, abandon their old manor, which soon becomes run-down, and go to the capital, where the father, with his Cross of Saint Louis,[22] instead of the Lord he was becomes a servant or sharper[23]; the mother founds a gaming den; the daughter attracts the gamblers; and often all three, after living a life of infamy, die in misery and dishonor.

Authors, Men of Letters, Philosophers never cease proclaiming that, to fulfill your duties as a citizen, to serve your fellow creatures, you have to live in the great cities; to them, to flee Paris is to hate the human race[24]; the people of the countryside are naught in their eyes; to hear them, one would believe that men are found only where there are pensions, academies, and dinners.[25]

One after the other all the estates[26] slide down the same slope. Tales, Novels, Plays, all attract people from the Provinces; all heap derision on the simplicity of rustic morality; all preach the manners and pleasures of high society: it's a disgrace to be unfamiliar with them; it's a misfortune not to appreciate them. Who knows with how many thieves and prostitutes the attraction of these imaginary pleasures fills Paris every day? Thus prejudice and opinion, reinforcing the effect of political systems, lump together, pile up the inhabitants of every country in a few points of the territory, leaving all the rest fallow and waste: thus, that their Capitals may be resplendent, Nations depopulate themselves; and the frivolous glitter that dazzles fools' eyes propels Europe in rapid strides toward her ruin. Human happiness demands that we try to halt this torrent of poisoned maxims. It's the Preachers' job to exhort us with *Be good, be virtuous*, without much concern for the results of their sermons; the citizen who is concerned about them should not foolishly exhort us with *Be good*; but make us love the estate that helps us do so.

N. Just a moment: catch your breath. I like useful opinions; and I have followed you so closely in this one that I think I can declaim for you.

It is clear, according to your reasoning, that in order to give works of imagination the only usefulness they can have, they should be directed toward an end opposite to the one their Authors intend; set aside everything artificial; bring everything back to nature; give men the love of a regular and simple life; cure them of the whims of opinion; restore their taste for true pleasures; make them love solitude and peace; keep them at some distance from each other; and instead of inciting them to pile into the Cities, motivate them to spread themselves evenly across the territory to invigorate its every part. I further understand that it's not a matter of making them into Daphnises, Sylvandres, Arcadian Pastors, Shepherds of the Lignon,[27] illustrious Peasants tilling their fields with their own hands and philosophizing about nature, nor other such romantic beings who can exist only in books; but of demonstrating to well-to-do people that rustic life and agriculture offer pleasures they cannot know; that these pleasures are less insipid, less coarse than they imagine; that plenty of taste, variety, discrimination can be found in them; that a man of merit who wanted to retire to the country with his family and become his own farmer could lead a life just as blissful there as in the midst of City entertainments; that a country housewife can be a charming woman, as full of graces, and graces more affecting, as all the coquettes[28]; in short that the heart's sweetest sentiments can animate a more agreeable society there than the contrived language of worldly circles, where our mordant and satirical laughter is the sorry substitute for a mirth no longer found therein. Is that it?

R. Precisely. To which I shall add just one comment. We hear it complained that Novels trouble people's minds: I can well believe it. By endlessly setting before their readers' eyes the pretended charms of an estate that is not their own, they seduce them, lead them to view their own with contempt, and trade it in their imagination for the one they are induced to love. Trying to be what we are not, we come to believe ourselves different from what we are, and that is the way to go mad.[29] If Novels offered their Readers only tableaux of objects that surround them, only duties they can fulfill, only pleasures of their own station, Novels would not make them mad, they would make them wise. Writings intended for Solitary Folk must speak the language of Solitary Folk; to instruct them, they must please them, and engage them; they must attach them to their own estate by making it seem congenial to them. They must combat and destroy the maxims of large societies; they must expose them as false and contemptible, that is, as they really are. In all these respects a Novel, if it is done well,

at least if it is useful, is bound to be hissed, hated, decried by fashionable people, as an insipid, extravagant, ridiculous book; and that, Monsieur, is how the world's madness is wisdom.[30]

N. Your conclusion is self-evident. A man's failure could not be more clearly predicted, or his downfall more proudly prepared. I still see one difficulty. Provincials, you know, read only on our word: the only things that reach them are those we send. A book destined for Solitary Folk is first judged by worldly people; if the latter reject it, the former do not read it. What say you to that?

R. That is an easy one to answer. You are talking about Provincial wits; and I am talking about real folk. All of you who shine in the Capital have prejudices you must get over: you think you set the tone for all of France, and three-quarters of France doesn't know you exist. The books that fail in Paris make the fortune of Booksellers in the Provinces.

N. Why would you want them to get rich at the expense of ours?

R. Make fun. But I persist. When one aspires to glory, it is essential to be read in Paris; when one wants to be useful, it is essential to be read in the provinces. How many honest people spend their lives cultivating their fathers' patrimony in the distant countryside, to which they consider themselves more or less exiled by the modesty of their fortune? During the long winter nights, lacking company, they while their evening time by the fire in reading entertaining books that fall to hand. In their coarse simplicity, they have pretensions neither to literature nor to wit; they read to fight boredom and not to learn; books of morality and philosophy are for them as if they did not exist: it would be futile to make any such books for them; they would never get them. However, far from offering them anything suitable to their situation, your Novels serve only to make it seem more bitter. They turn their retreat into an awful wasteland, and for the few hours of distraction they afford, set in store months of malaise and vain regrets. Why should I not dare suppose that, by some stroke of luck, this book, like so many others that are even worse, may fall into the hands of these Inhabitants of the fields, and that the image of the pleasures of an estate quite similar to theirs will make it seem more bearable? I like to picture a husband and wife reading this collection together, finding in it a source of renewed courage to bear their common labors, and perhaps new perspectives to make them useful. How could they behold this tableau of a happy couple without wanting to imitate such an attractive model? How will they be stirred by the charm of conjugal union, even in the absence of love's charm, without their own union being reconfirmed and strengthened? When they are through reading, they will be neither saddened by their estate nor repelled by their chores. On the contrary, everything

around them will seem to take on a more cheerful outlook; their duties will become nobler in their eyes; they will rediscover their taste for the pleasures of nature: its true sentiments will be reborn in their hearts, and seeing happiness close at hand, they will learn to appreciate it. They will fulfill the same functions; but they will fulfill them with a changed soul, and will do as genuine Patriarchs what they had been doing as peasants.

N. So far so good. Husbands, wives, mothers..... But maidens; have you nothing to say about them?

R. No. An honest maiden does not read love stories. May she who reads this one, despite its title,[31] not complain of the harm it has done her: she lies. The harm was already done; she has nothing more to risk.

N. Wonderful! Hear this, ye erotic authors: you have just been vindicated.

R. Yes, if they are vindicated by their own hearts and by the object of their writings.

N. And are you, under the same conditions?

R. I am too proud to answer that; but Julie had a rule for judging books*[32]: if it seems good to you, use it here to judge the present one.

Some have tried to make the reading of Novels useful to youth.[33] I know of no more stupid design. It is setting fire to the house in order to put the pumps into action. According to this foolish notion, instead of directing the moral of these sorts of works toward their public they always address it to young girls,**[34] forgetting that young girls have no part in the disorders complained of. In general, their conduct is proper, though their hearts be corrupt. They obey their mothers until they can imitate them. When wives do their duty, be sure that daughters will not fail in theirs.

N. Observation is against you on this point. It seems that the fair sex must always have a period of license, in whatever estate. It is a bad leavening that ferments sooner or later. Among peoples who have morals, girls are approachable and wives strict: the reverse obtains among peoples who have none. The former pay attention only to transgressions, the latter only to scandal. All that matters is evading proof, the crime itself counts for nothing.

R. That is not how one would judge it in the light of its consequences. But let us be fair to wives; the cause of their disorder lies less in themselves than in our evil institutions.

Ever since all the sentiments of nature have been stifled by extreme inequality, it is from the iniquitous despotism of fathers that the vices and misfortunes of children arise; it is in forced and ill-matched unions that

* Part II, page 214.

**This applies only to modern English novels.

young wives, victims of their parents' avarice or vanity, undo, through a disorder in which they take pride, the scandal of their original honesty. Would you cure this evil? Go back to the source. If there is some reform to attempt in public morals, it must begin with domestic morals, and that depends absolutely on fathers and mothers. But this is not how the instruction is aimed; your cowardly authors preach only to the oppressed; and the moral of books will always be vain, because it is merely the art of flattering the strongest.

N. Assuredly your own is not servile; but in being so free, is it not indeed too much so? Is it enough for it to seek the source of the evil? Do you not fear it will cause some of its own?

R. Cause evil? To whom? In times of epidemics and contagion, when everyone is infected from infancy, should one prevent the sale of drugs beneficial to the sick, under the pretext that they could harm the healthy? Monsieur, we differ so much on this point that, if we could hope some measure of success for these Letters, I am quite persuaded that they would do more good than a better book.

N. It is true that your heroine is an excellent Preacher. I am delighted to see you reconciled with women: I was disappointed that you forbade them to sermonize us.*[35]

R. You are insistent; I must hold my tongue: I am neither fool nor wise enough always to be right. Let's leave that bone for the critics to gnaw on.

N. Heartily: lest they be without. But even if we had nothing to say to anyone else about all the rest, how can we get the lively situations and impassioned sentiments in which this whole collection abounds past the stern censor of the stage? Show me one theatrical scene that constitutes a tableau comparable to those of the bower at Clarens**[36] and the dressing room? Read the letter on the theater again[37]; read this collection again..... Be consistent, or leave aside your principles..... What do you expect people to think?

R. I, Monsieur, expect a critic to be consistent himself, and for him to judge only after examination. Reread more carefully the work you just cited; reread likewise the preface to *Narcissus*,[38] there you will find the answer to the inconsistency you attribute to me. The fops who pretend to perceive some in *The Village Soothsayer*[39] will certainly find far more here. They will be doing their job: but you...

N. I recall two passages...***[40] You don't think much of your contemporaries.

* See the *Letter to M. d'Alembert on Spectacles*, p. 81, first edition.
** This is pronounced *Claran*.
*** Preface to *Narcissus*, pp. 28 and 32; *Letter to M. d'Alembert*, pp. 223, 224.

R. Monsieur, I am their contemporary as well! Oh! would I had been born in an age when I ought rather have thrown this collection into the fire!

N. You are going too far, as is your wont; but up to a point your maxims are rather accurate. For example, if your Heloise had always been virtuous, she would be much less instructive; for to whom would she serve as a model? It is in the most depraved ages that people like lessons of the most perfect morality. That allows them not to practice them; and one satisfies at little cost, with some idle reading, a remnant of taste for virtue.

R. Sublime Authors, bring your models down a bit, if you want people to try to imitate them. To whom do you vaunt purity that has not been sullied? Well! tell us about purity that can be recovered; perhaps at least someone will be able to get your meaning.

N. Your young man has already made those reflections[41]: but no matter; people will still villainize you for showing what they do, in order to show subsequently what they ought to do. Not to mention that to inspire love in daughters and modesty in wives is to reverse the established order and bring back the whole petty morality that Philosophy has banished.[42] Say what you will, in maidens love is indecent and scandalous, and only a husband can authorize a lover. What a strange blunder, to be indulgent with maidens, who ought not to read you, and strict with wives, who will judge you! Believe me, if you are afraid of success, have no worry: your measures are too well taken for you to fear such an affront. However that may be, I shall keep your secret; be only half imprudent. If you believe you are offering a useful book, fine; but by all means do not own it.

R. Own it, Monsieur? Does an honorable man hide when he addresses the Public? Does he dare to print what he would not dare acknowledge? I am the Editor of this book, and I shall name myself as Editor.

N. You will name yourself? You?

R. Myself.

N. What! You will put your name on it?

R. Yes, Monsieur.

N. Your real name? *Jean Jacques Rousseau*, in full?

R. *Jean Jacques Rousseau* in full.

N. You wouldn't! What will people say?

R. Whatever they will. I put my name at the head of the collection, not to claim it as mine; but to answer for it. If it contains evil, let it be imputed to me; if good, I do not plan to boast of it. If the book is found to be bad in itself, that is all the more reason for putting my name on it. I do not wish to be thought better than I am.

N. Are you satisfied with that reply?

R. I am, in times when it isn't possible for anyone to be good.

N. And the beautiful souls, are you forgetting them?

R. Nature made them, your institutions spoil them.

N. On the title page of a love story we will read these words: *By J. J. ROUSSEAU, Citizen of Geneva*!

R. *Citizen of Geneva*? No, not that. I do not profane the name of my fatherland; I put it only on writings I believe will do it honor.

N. You yourself bear a name that is not without honor, and you too have something to lose. You are putting out a weak and trite book that will hurt your reputation. I wish I could prevent you from doing so; but if you do such a foolish thing, I approve of your doing it boldly and frankly. That at least will be in character. But by the way: will you put your motto also on this book?

R. My Bookseller already made that joke, and it seemed to me such a good one that I promised to give him credit for it.[43] No, Monsieur, I shall not put my motto on this book; but that does not mean I shall give it up, and I am less apprehensive than ever about having adopted it. Remember that I was intending to publish these Letters while I was writing against the Theater, and that my concern to justify one of these Writings did not lead me to distort truth in the other. I have accused myself beforehand perhaps more than anyone else will accuse me. He who prefers truth to his reputation can hope to prefer it to his very life. You want people always to be consistent; I doubt that is possible for man; but what is possible is for him always to be true: that is what I mean to try to be.

N. When I ask you whether you are the author of these Letters, why then do you elude my question?

R. For the very reason that I do not wish to tell a lie.

N. But you also refuse to tell the truth?

R. To declare that one wishes to keep truth unspoken is still to honor it. You would have an easier time with a man who was willing to lie. Besides, do people of taste mistake Authors' pens? How dare you ask a question that is for you to decide?

N. I would willingly decide it for some Letters; they are certainly by you; but I do not recognize you in the others, and I doubt one can impersonate to that extent. Nature, who has no fear of being mistaken, often changes her appearance, and art often betrays itself when it tries to be more natural than she: it's the Squealer of the Fable who makes the sound of the animal's voice better than the animal itself.[44] This collection is full of things so clumsy the meanest scribbler would have avoided them. Declamations, repetitions, contradictions, endless rehashing; where is the man who if he could do better would resign himself to doing so poorly? Where is the man who would have let stand the shocking proposition that fool

Edward makes to Julie?[45] Where is the man who would not have corrected the silliness of the little fellow who, ever seeking death, takes care to alert everybody to that fact, and ends up still feeling fine? Where is the one who would not have begun by telling himself: the characters must be well differentiated; the styles must be studiously varied? With this design he would infallibly have done better than Nature.

I observe that in a very closely knit society, styles as well as characters become more like each other, and that friends, confounding their souls, also confound their manners of thinking, of feeling, and of speaking. This Julie, such as she is, must be an enchantress; everyone who comes near her is bound to resemble her; everyone about her is bound to become Julie; all her friends are bound to have the same voice; but these are matters of feeling, and cannot be dreamed up. Even if they could be dreamed up, the inventor would not dare put them into practice. All he requires is traits that strike the multitude; whatever becomes simple again with the help of niceties no longer suits him. Now that is where one finds the seal of truth; that is where an observant eye seeks and rediscovers nature.

R. And so you conclude?

N. I do not conclude; I doubt, and I cannot tell you how much that doubt has tormented me during the reading of these letters. Certainly, if it is all just fiction, you have made a bad book: but say that these two women have existed; and I shall reread this Collection every year for the rest of my life.

R. Oh! what does it matter whether they ever existed? In vain would you would seek them on the earth. They are no more.

N. They are no more? Then they once were?

R. This conclusion is conditional: if they once were, they are no more.

N. Between us, admit that these little subtleties are more determining than embarrassing.

R. They are what you force them to be so as neither to betray me nor lie.

N. In faith, it won't do you any good, you will be figured out in spite of yourself. Don't you see that your epigraph alone says it all?

R. I see that it says nothing about the point in question: for who can know whether I found this epigraph in the manuscript, or whether it is I who put it there?[46] Who can say that I am not in the same doubt as you? That all this air of mystery is not perhaps a feint to conceal from you my own ignorance of what you are trying to find out?

N. But after all, you know the sites? You have been to Vevey, in the Vaud country?

R. Several times; and I declare to you that I have not there heard men-

tion of the Baron d'Étange nor of his daughter. The name of Monsieur de Wolmar is not even known. I have been to Clarens: nothing I saw there was similar to the house described in these Letters. I passed through there, on my return from Italy, in the very year of the fatal event, and no one was mourning either Julie de Wolmar, nor anyone like her, so far as I know. And finally, insofar as I can recall the lie of the land, I noted in these Letters transpositions of place and errors of Topography[47]; either because the Author indeed knew it no better than that, or because his design was to confuse his Readers. That is all you will learn from me on this point, and you may be sure that others will not extract from me what I refuse to reveal to you.

N. Everyone will be as curious as I. If you publish this Work, then tell the Public what you have told me. Do more, write down this conversation as the sole Preface. All the necessary clarifications are there.

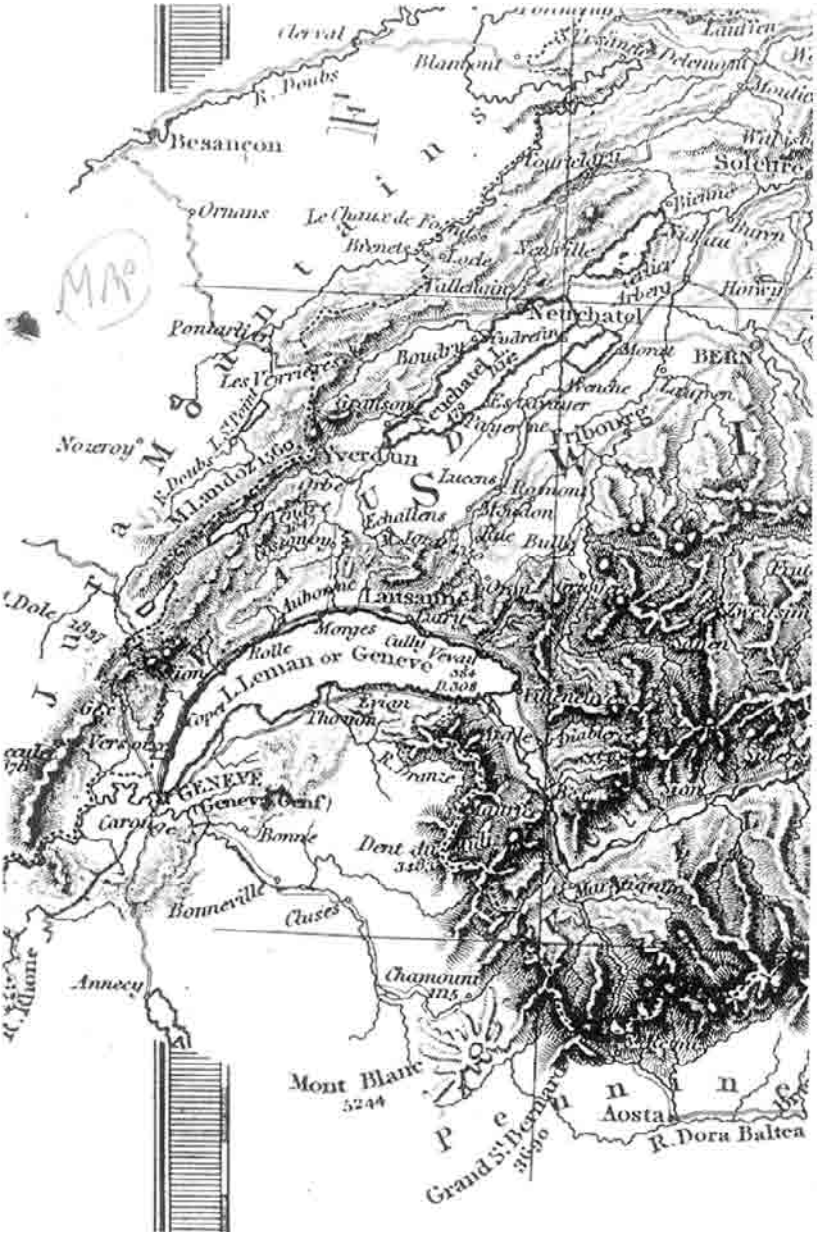
R. You are right: it is better than what I would have said on my own. Moreover that sort of apology doesn't work at all.

N. No, when it is clear that the Author spares himself; but I have taken care that no such defect be found in the present one. One thing, though, I advise you to transpose our roles. Pretend it is I who am urging you to publish this Collection, and that you are reluctant. Give yourself the objections, and me the replies. That will be more modest, and make a better impression.

R. Will that too be in the character you praised me for earlier?

N. No, I was setting a trap for you. Leave things as they are.

End.



Map of the Vaud Country and Surrounding Region.

Vevey will be found in the northeastern quadrant of Lake Leman, which is about seventy kilometers from end to end. The southern shore of the Lake is part of the kingdom of Savoie (now Chalais, part of France). The Rhone flows into the lake, through the Valais, from the southeast. Meillerie is just opposite Vevey, where this map indicates a depth of 308 yards. (All depths and heights on this map are in yards.)

Detail of map entitled "Germany III: Baden, Würtemberg, Bavaria, Tyrol and Switzerland," published by Baldwin and Cradock, 1832, courtesy Special Collections of Duke University Library.

Part One

LETTER I

To Julie

I must flee you, Mademoiselle, that I can see: I should not have waited nearly so long, or rather it were better never to have laid eyes on you. But what is to be done at present? How should I go about it? You promised me friendship; behold my confusion, and counsel me.

You know that I entered your house only at the invitation of your worthy Mother.[1] Knowing that I had cultivated some agreeable talents, she believed that they would not be without usefulness, in a locale wanting in masters, toward the education of a daughter she adores. Taking pride, for my part, in adorning such a fine natural temperament with a few flowers, I ventured to assume this dangerous charge without foreseeing the peril, or at least without fear of it. I will not tell you that I am beginning to pay the price for my temerity: I hope I shall never so forget myself as to say to you things that are not suitable for you to hear, and fail in the respect I owe even more to your morals than to your station and your charms. If I suffer, I have at least the consolation of suffering alone, and I have no desire for a happiness that could diminish yours.

Yet I see you every day; and I perceive that without intending to you are innocently exacerbating sufferings which you cannot pity, and of which you ought to remain unaware. I know, to be sure, the course that prudence, in the absence of any hope, dictates in such an case, and I would have made every effort to follow it, if I could in the circumstance reconcile prudence with honesty; but how could I decently withdraw from a house whose mistress herself invited me in, where she showers kindnesses upon me, and believes I can be of some use to what she holds dearest on earth? How can I deprive that tender mother of the pleasure of surprising her husband some day with your progress in studies which to this end she conceals from him? Must I leave impolitely, without a word to her? Must I declare to her the cause of my withdrawal, and will not this very avowal offend her, coming from a man whose station and fortune cannot allow him to aspire to you?

I see, Mademoiselle, but one way out of the quandary I am in: that the

hand which plunges me into it pull me out, that my punishment as well as my fault come from you, and that out of pity for me at least you do me the favor of banishing me from your presence. Show my letter to your parents; have me refused entry to your house; dismiss me in whatever way you prefer; from you I can bear anything; by myself I cannot flee you.

You, dismiss me! I, flee you! and why? Why then is it a crime to be sensible[2] to merit, and to love what one has to honor? No, fair Julie; your charms had dazzled my eyes, never would they have led my heart astray without the stronger charm that animates them. It is that touching combination of such lively sensibility and unfailing gentleness, it is that tender pity for all the sufferings of others, it is that sound judgment and exquisite taste that draw their purity from the soul's own, it is, in a word, the attractions of the sentiments far more than those of the person that I worship in you. I allow that one could imagine you still more beautiful; but more lovable and more worthy of an honorable man's heart, no, Julie, that is not possible.

Sometimes I dare to presume that Heaven has put a hidden conformity in our affections, as it did in our tastes and age. Still so young, we possess all of nature's penchants undistorted, and all our inclinations seem to coincide. Not having yet acquired the uniform prejudices of the world, we have uniform ways of feeling and seeing, and why should I not dare imagine in our hearts the same accord I perceive in our opinions? Sometimes our eyes meet; sometimes sighs escape us at the same moment; sometimes furtive tears..... O Julie! should this harmony have a more profound origin..... should Heaven have destined us.... all of human strength..... oh, forgive me. I am overstepping: I am presuming to take my wishes for hope: the intensity of my desires lends to their object the possibility it is wanting.

I dread to perceive what torment lies in store for my heart. I seek not to humor my affliction; I would rather hate it if that were possible. Judge whether my sentiments are pure, by the kind of mercy I come to ask of you. Cut off if it can be done the source of the poison that nourishes and kills me. I want only to mend or die, and I implore your rigors as a lover would implore your favors.

Yes, I promise, I swear I will for my part do everything I can to recover my reason, or to repress into the recesses of my soul the disorder I feel arising therein: but for pity's sake avert from me those so gentle eyes that are the death of me; from mine hide your features, your expression, your arms, your hands, your golden hair,[3] your gestures; elude the eager recklessness of my glances; withhold that touching voice which cannot be

heard without emotion: be, alas, someone other than yourself, so my heart can repossess itself.

Shall I say it outright? In these games spawned by idle evening hours, you allow yourself cruelly unguarded gestures in front of everyone; you show no more reserve with me than with anyone else. Only yesterday, you very nearly let me take a kiss from you as a forfeit: you resisted feebly. Thank goodness I was careful not to insist. I could tell from my increasing turmoil that I was about to give myself away, and I checked myself. Ah, if only I might have savored it as I would have wished, that kiss would have been my last sigh, and I would have died the happiest of men!

Pray, let us give up such games which can have fatal consequences. No, not one of them is without its danger, not even the most childish of all. I am ever trembling lest my hand touch yours, and somehow it always does. No sooner does your hand rest on mine than a tremor goes through me; such sport gives me a fever or rather delirium; I cease to see or feel anything, and in that moment of alienation,[4] what can I say, what can I do, where can I hide, how can I answer for myself?

When we do our readings, another difficulty arises. If I see you for an instant without your mother or your cousin, your demeanor abruptly changes; you take on so serious, so cold, so icy an air that respect and the fear of displeasing you deprive me of my presence of mind and my judgment, and I can scarcely manage to stammer a few trembling words from a lesson which for all your sagacity you have difficulty following. Thus your willful inconsistency works against the interest of us both: you dismay me and make no progress, yet I cannot conceive for what motive so reasonable a person has such a change of humor. I presume now to ask you, how can you be so playful in public and so solemn when we are alone together? I would have expected just the opposite, and that one's demeanor should be controlled in proportion to the number of Observers. Instead of this, I am equally bewildered to see you maintain with me a ceremonious tone in private, and a familiar one in company. Do be more consistent, perhaps I shall be less tormented.

If the commiseration natural to well-born souls can move you with the sufferings of an unhappy man on whom you have bestowed some marks of esteem, slight changes in your behavior will make his situation less violent, and help him bear both his silence and his woes more peaceably: if his restraint and his condition do not touch you, and you choose to avail yourself of your right to do him in, you may do so without his uttering a murmur: he would still rather perish by your command than by some indiscreet transport that would indict him in your eyes. In short, whatever

fate you prescribe for me, at least I shall not have to reproach myself for having conceived a presumptuous hope, and if you have read this letter, you have done all that I would dare to ask of you, even were there no refusal for me to fear.

LETTER II

To Julie

How I deceived myself, Mademoiselle, in my first Letter! Instead of relieving my afflictions, I have only increased them by exposing myself to your disfavor, and I feel that the worst of them all is to displease you. Your silence, your cold and reserved manner only too clearly proclaim my rejection. If you have partly answered my prayer, it is only the better to punish me for it;

> *E poi ch'amor di me vi fece accorta*
> *Fur i biondi capelli allor velati,*
> *E l'amoroso sguardo in se raccolto.*[5]
>
> And love having made you aware of me,
> you veiled your blond hair
> and kept your sweet eyes to yourself.

You withdraw in public the innocent familiarity of which I was foolish enough to complain; but you are all the more severe when we are in private, and your wily severity manifests itself as much in your indulgence as in your refusals.

Could you only appreciate how cruel this coldness is to me! You would deem me too well punished. How eagerly would I move backward in time so that you should never have seen that fatal letter! No, for fear of offending you once more, I would not now be writing this one, had I not written the first, and I want not to repeat my fault, but repair it. To appease you must I say I was deceiving myself? Must I protest that what I felt for you was not love?..... I, utter such a loathsome perjury! Is a vile lie worthy of a heart over which you reign? Ah! let me be unhappy, if I must; for having been too bold I will be neither a liar nor a coward, and the crime that my heart has committed my pen cannot disown.

I can already feel the weight of your indignation, and I anticipate its worst effects as a favor you owe me for want of any other; for the fire that consumes me deserves punishment, but not contempt. For pity's sake, do not abandon me to my own devices; be so good at least as to dispose of my fate; declare what is your will. Whatever you may dictate, I can but obey.

Will you impose an everlasting silence? I shall manage to force myself to observe it. Will you banish me from your presence? I swear you shall see me no more. Will you order me to die? Ah! that will not be the most difficult thing. There is no command to which I will not agree, except to love you no more: and even in this I would obey you, if there were a way for me to do so.

A hundred times a day I am tempted to throw myself at your feet, to bathe them in my tears, there to find death or forgiveness. Each time a mortal terror numbs my courage; my knees tremble and dare not bend; the words expire on my lips, and my soul can muster no reassurance against the dread of provoking you.

Is there on earth a situation more wretched than mine? My heart is only too aware of its guilt and is unable to diminish it; crime and remorse torment it at the same time, and without knowing what my destiny will be, I drift in unbearable uncertainty between the hope of mercy and the fear of punishment.

But no, I hope for nothing, I have no right to hope for anything. The only favor I seek from you is to hasten my execution. Satisfy a righteous vengeance. When you see me reduced to begging for it myself, am I unhappy enough for you? Punish me, as you must: but if you are not pitiless, cease that cold and discontented mien that drives me to despair: when a criminal is sent to his death, he is no longer treated with anger.

LETTER III

To Julie

Be not angered, Mademoiselle; this will be the last of my importunities.

When I began to love you, how far was I from foreseeing all the afflictions I was storing up for myself! At the outset the only one I felt was that of a love without hope, which reason given time can overcome; next I learned of a greater one in the pangs of your displeasure; and now I am experiencing the cruellest of all, in the sentiment of your own sufferings. O Julie! I observe with bitterness that my complaints trouble your peace of mind. You maintain an invincible silence, but everything discloses your hidden agitations to my observant heart. Your eyes become somber, distracted, downcast; occasional wandering glances alight on me; your bright color fades; an unwonted pallor comes over your cheeks; gaiety abandons you; a mortal sadness overwhelms you; and only the unfailing gentleness of your soul shields you from a touch of ill temper.

Be it sensibility, disdain, or pity for my sufferings, you are affected by

them, I can see that; I fear to contribute to your own, and this fear afflicts me a good deal more than the hope it should kindle can hearten me; for either I delude myself, or your happiness is more precious to me than my own.

And yet when I think back on myself, I begin to discover how greatly I had misjudged my own heart, and see too late that what I had first taken for a transient delirium will determine my lifelong destiny. It is the increase of your sadness that has made me feel that of my affliction. Never, no, never would the fire in your eyes, the glow of your complexion, the charms of your mind, all the graces of your former gaiety, have produced an effect comparable to that of your despondency. Doubt not, divine Julie, that could you see the incandescence this long week of languor has kindled in my soul, you yourself would lament the afflictions you are causing me. They are henceforth beyond remedy, and I sense with despair that the fire which consumes me will die only in the grave.

No matter; he who cannot achieve happiness can at least be deserving of it, and I will find a way to compel you to esteem a man to whom you have not deigned to address the slightest reply. I am young and may some day merit the consideration of which I am not worthy now. In the meanwhile, I must restore to you the peace which I have forever lost, and of which I am here despite myself depriving you. It is just that I should bear alone the punishment for the crime of which I alone am guilty. Adieu, too fair Julie, live in tranquillity, and resume your lively temper; as of tomorrow you shall see no more of me. But be assured that the pure, ardent love for you with which I have burned will never die while I live; that my heart, filled with a loved one so worthy, will have lost all capacity to accept less; that it will henceforth divide its homage solely between you and virtue, and that no one will ever see other flames profane the altar where Julie once was worshipped.

NOTE
From Julie[6]

Do not take away with you the assumption that you have made your removal necessary. A virtuous heart would manage to master itself or keep silent, and would perhaps become dangerous. But you.....[7] you may stay.

REPLY

I have long kept my silence; your coldness finally has made me speak.

Though one can perhaps master oneself for the sake of virtue, one does not suffer the scorn of the person one loves. Leave I must.

SECOND NOTE
From Julie

No, Monsieur; after what you appear to have felt; after what you have dared to tell me; a man such as you have feigned to be does not leave; he does more than that.[8]

REPLY

I have feigned nothing, save a moderate passion, in a heart in despair. Tomorrow you shall be content, and whatever you may say, I will have done something less than leave.

THIRD NOTE
From Julie

Are you mad? If you value my life,[9] do not think of taking your own. I am beset with company, and can neither speak nor write to you until tomorrow. Wait.

LETTER IV
From Julie

So I must confess it at last, this fatal, too ill-disguised secret! How many times have I sworn my heart would keep it as long as I live! The danger to your life wrests it from me; it will out, and honor is lost. Alas! I have been too true to my word; is there a death more cruel than outliving honor?

What can I say, how do I break such a painful silence? Or rather have I not already said all, and have you not too well understood me?[10] Ah, you have seen too much not to divine the rest! Drawn by degrees into the snares of a vile seducer, I see the horrible precipice into which I am hurtling without being able to stop myself. Artful man! It is far more my love than yours that emboldens you. You see my heart's distraction; you avail yourself of it to undo me, and when you make me despicable, the worst of my woes is to be forced to despise you. Ah wretch! I esteemed you, and

you dishonor me! believe me, if your heart were such that it could savor this triumph in peace, it would never have obtained it.

As you know, your remorse will be the greater for it; my soul harbored no such vicious inclinations. I valued modesty and honesty; I was happy cultivating them in a simple and laborious life. What good to me were efforts which Heaven rejected? From the first day I was unfortunate enough to behold you, I felt the poison that corrupts my senses and my reason; I felt it from the first instant, and your eyes, your sentiments, your words, your criminal pen make it more deadly every day.

I have tried every way I know to halt the advance of this fatal passion. Lacking the power to resist, I have tried to ensure I should not be attacked; your pursuits have defeated my vain prudence. A hundred times have I nearly thrown myself at the feet of those who gave me life, a hundred times have I nearly opened my guilty heart to them; they cannot know what goes on inside it: they will try to apply ordinary remedies to a hopeless sickness; my mother is weak and lacks authority; I know my father's unbending severity, and I would only bring myself, my family, and even you to ruin and dishonor. My cousin is away, my brother is no more; I find no protector on earth against the enemy pursuing me; in vain do I implore Heaven, Heaven is deaf to the prayers of the weak. Everything foments the ardor that devours me; everything abandons me to myself, or rather delivers me into your hands; all of nature seems to be your accomplice; all my efforts are in vain, I worship you in spite of myself. How could my heart, which in full force was incapable of resistance, now surrender only halfway? How could this heart which can dissimulate nothing conceal from you the rest of its weakness? Ah! it was the first step, the most difficult one, which I ought not to have taken; how could I now stop at the others? No, from this first step I feel myself drawn into the abyss, and you may make me as unhappy as you like.

Such is the awful state I am in, that I have no recourse left except to the very man who reduced me to it, and that to protect me from ruin, you must be my sole defender against yourself. I know I might have put off this admission of my despair; I could have disguised my shame for a while, and yielded gradually so as better to fool myself. Vain subterfuge which might have humored my †vanity but could not save my virtue! Oh no, I see too well, sense too well where the first fault leads, and I was not seeking to bring about my undoing, but to avoid it.

All the same, if you be not the basest of men, if ever some spark of virtue shone in your soul, if there still remains some vestige of the sentiments of honor with which you seemed to me imbued, can I think you vile enough to take advantage of the fatal admission which my delirium wrings

from me? No, I know you well; you will undergird my weakness, you will become my safeguard, you will protect my person from my own heart. Your virtues are the last refuge of my innocence; my honor makes bold to entrust itself to yours, you cannot preserve the one without the other; generous soul, ah! preserve them both; and if only for your own sake, pray take pity on me.

O God! am I sufficiently humiliated? I write to you on my knees; I bathe this paper with my tears; I raise to you my timid supplications. And do not think, nevertheless, that I do not know it should have been for me to hear them, and that to be obeyed I had only to become artfully despicable. Friend, take that vain empire, and leave me my honesty: I had rather be your slave and live in innocence than purchase your dependency at the price of my dishonor. If you deign to hear me, what love, what veneration may you not expect from one who will owe you her return to life? What charms in the sweet union of two pure souls! Your desires overcome will be the source of your happiness, and the pleasures you will enjoy will be worthy of Heaven itself.

I believe, I hope, that a heart that seemed to me deserving of all the affection of my own will not belie the generosity I am expecting of it. I further hope that if it were craven enough to take advantage of my disarray and of the admissions it has wrested from me, contempt and indignation would restore the reason I have lost, and I would not myself be so craven as to fear a lover of whom I should have to be ashamed. You will be virtuous or despised; I shall be respected or cured; such is the last hope left to me except that of dying.

LETTER V

To Julie

Heavenly powers! I had a soul for suffering, give me one for felicity. Love, life of the soul, come sustain mine which is about to faint away. Inexpressible charm of virtue! Invincible power of the beloved's voice! Happiness, pleasures, transports, how piercing are your darts! Who can bear up under their blows? Oh how shall I withstand the torrent of delights that floods my heart? How shall I expiate the apprehensions of a timid lover? Julie.... no! my Julie on her knees! My Julie shedding tears!.... she to whom all creation should bear homage imploring a man who worships her not to do her violence, not to dishonor himself! If I could be incensed at you I would be, for your fears which demean us! Think better, pure and celestial beauty, of the nature of your empire. Oh! if I worship

the charms of your person, is it not above all for the imprint of that spotless soul that animates it, of which all your features bear the divine stamp? You fear you will yield to my suit? But what suit can she fear who covers with respect and honesty every sentiment she inspires? Is there on earth a man vile enough to dare be brazen with you?

Let me, do let me savor the unforeseen happiness of being loved.... loved by her..... Worldly throne, how I now look down on thee![11] Let me reread a thousand times this wonderful letter where your love and sentiments are written in characters of fire; where, despite all the impetuosity of an agitated heart, I see with transport how in an honest soul the most lively passions still retain the holy character of virtue. What monster, having read this moving letter, could take advantage of your state, and prove by the most flagrant act his utter contempt of his own self? No, my beloved, trust a faithful friend who is not one to deceive you. Although my reason is lost forever, although the turmoil of my senses grows by the minute, your person is henceforth for me the most charming, but the most sacred trust that ever honored a mortal. My flame and its object will together preserve an incorruptible purity. I would shudder to lay a hand on your virgin charms, more than I would at the vilest incest, and your surety is not more inviolate with your father than with your lover. Oh if ever this happy lover forgets himself an instant in your presence..... Julie's lover could have an abject soul! No, when I cease to love virtue, I will no longer love you; at my first craven act, I want you no longer to love me.

Be assured then, I implore you in the name of the tender and pure love that unites us; let it be the warrant of my restraint and respect; let it protect you from itself. And why should your fears go farther than my desires? To what other happiness could I aspire, when my whole heart can scarcely contain the one it now relishes? We are both young, it is true; we love for the first and only time of our lives, and have no experience of the passions; but is the honor that directs us a deceitful guide? Does it require a dubious experience acquired only by dint of vices? I know not if I delude myself, but it seems to me I have all the right sentiments deep in my heart. I am no vile seducer as you call me in your despair, but a simple and sensible man, who readily displays what he feels and feels nothing for which he must be ashamed. To say it all in a single word, I abhor crime even more than I love Julie. I know not, no, I know not whether the love you inspire is even compatible with the neglect of virtue, and whether any but an honest soul can sufficiently appreciate all your charms. As for me, the more I am under their spell, the more exalted are my sentiments. What good thing that I would not have done for its own sake, would I not now do to become

worthy of you? Ah! do but entrust yourself to the flame you inspire in me, and which you are so able to purify; do believe that the fact I worship you is enough to make me forever respect the precious trust you have placed in my care. Oh what a heart I am going to possess! True happiness, the glory of the loved one, the triumph of a love that honors itself, how superior art thou to all its pleasures!

LETTER VI

From Julie to Claire

Do you, my Cousin, mean to spend your life mourning that poor Chaillot, and must the dead cause you to forget the living? Your grief is just, and I share it, but must it be eternal? Since you lost your mother, she had raised you with the greatest of care; she was more your friend than your governess. She loved you tenderly, and loved me because you do; she never instilled in us anything but principles of propriety and honor. I know all that, my dear, and concede it with pleasure. But concede also that the good old woman was not very prudent with us, that she unnecessarily told us the most indiscreet secrets, that she was forever repeating maxims of gallantry, the adventures of her youth, the wiles of lovers, and that in order to protect us from the snares of men, if she didn't exactly teach us to set snares for them, she nonetheless instructed us about a thousand things which young maidens would do well not to know. Be comforted therefore in her loss, as a misfortune which is not unredeemed. At the age we have reached, her lessons were beginning to be dangerous, and Heaven perhaps took her from us at the moment when it was not good for her to remain with us longer . Remember all that you said to me when I lost the best of brothers. Is Chaillot dearer to you? Have you more reason to grieve for her?

Come back, my dear, she no longer needs you. Alas! while you are wasting your time in superfluous grief, how can you not fear bringing more upon yourself? How can you not fear, you who know the state of my heart, abandoning your friend to perils which your presence would have prevented? Oh how many things have happened since your departure! You will shudder to learn what dangers I have run by my imprudence. I hope I am delivered from them; but I find myself, so to speak, at another's discretion: it is for you to restore me to myself. Hasten therefore to return. I have said nothing so long as your ministries were useful to your poor Governess; I would have been the first to exhort you to take care of her. Now that she is no more, it is to her family that you owe them: we shall better fulfill them here together than you would alone in the country, and

you will discharge the duties of gratitude without neglecting those of friendship.

Since my Father's departure we have returned to our former manner of life and my mother leaves my side less often. But this is more out of habit than mistrust. Her social calls still occupy many of the moments she does not wish to steal from my little lessons, and then Babi fills her role rather negligently. Although it seems to me my good mother is much too secure, I cannot bring myself to warn her; I would like to provide for my safety without losing her good opinion of me, and you are the only one who can reconcile all that. Come back, my Claire, come without delay. I feel bad about lessons I take without you, and I am afraid of learning too much. Our master is not merely a man of merit; he is virtuous, and thus all the more to be feared. I am too satisfied with him to be satisfied with myself. At his age and ours, with the most virtuous of men, when he is easy to love, it is better there be two maidens than one.

LETTER VII

Reply

I hear you, and tremble for you. Not that I believe the danger as pressing as you imagine it. Your fears temper mine with respect to the present: but the future terrifies me, and if you cannot master yourself, I foresee nothing but misfortunes. Alas! how many times did poor Chaillot predict to me that your heart's first sigh would seal your life's destiny! Ah, Cousin! still so young, must we see your fate already accomplished? How we shall miss this able woman whose loss you think advantageous to us! Perhaps it would have been advantageous to fall from the outset into surer hands; but in leaving hers we know too much ever to allow ourselves to be governed by others, and not enough to govern ourselves: she alone could shield us from the dangers to which she had exposed us. She taught us much, and we have, it seems to me, done much thinking for our age. The warm and tender friendship that united us almost from the cradle has, in a manner of speaking, enlightened our hearts early on about every passion. We know their signs and their effects rather well; we lack only the art of repressing them. God grant that your young philosopher know more of that art than we.

When I say *we*, you hear me, it is of you above all that I am speaking: for in regard to me, the Governess always told me that my recklessness would stand me in stead of reason, that I would never have the wit to know how to love, and that I was too foolish ever to commit follies. My Julie, look

out for yourself; the better she augured for your reason, the more she feared for your heart. Take courage, all the same; all that propriety and honor can do, I know your soul will do, and mine, do not doubt it, will do all that friendship can do in turn. If we have learned too much for our years, at least such study came at no cost to our morals. Do believe, my dear, that there are many simpler maidens, who are less honest than we: if we are honest, it is because we choose to be, and whatever people may say, that is the means of being so more surely.

However on the basis of what you are telling me, I shall not have a moment's peace until I am by your side; for if you fear danger, it is not entirely illusory. It is true that prevention is easy; a word to your mother and that is the end; but I see what you mean; you want nothing to do with an expedient that puts an end to it all; you are willing to relinquish the right to succumb, but not the honor of the struggle. O poor Cousin!..... if only the least glimmer..... That the Baron d'Étange should consent to give his daughter, his only child, to a petty bourgeois without fortune! Do you expect that?..... what then do you expect? what do you want?..... poor, poor Cousin!..... Fear nothing, however, from me. Your friend will keep your secret. Many would find it is more honest to reveal it; maybe they would be right. For myself, who am not a great reasoner, I want nothing to do with an honesty that betrays faith, trust, friendship; I imagine that every relationship, every age has its maxims, its duties, its virtues, that what would be prudence to others, would to me be perfidy, and that to lump everything together, rather than making us virtuous, makes us wicked. If your love is weak, we shall overcome it; if it is extreme, to attack it with violent means is to expose it to tragic consequences, and friendship should attempt only those means for which it can accept responsibility. But on the other hand, you will have to toe the line when you are under my guardianship. You will see, you will see what it's like to have an eighteen-year-old Duenna![12]

It is not, as you know, for my own pleasure that I am far from you, and spring is not as pleasant in the country as you think; here we suffer from both cold and heat; there is no shade when we go walking, and we have to heat the house. My Father for his part doesn't fail to notice, for all his construction projects, that the gazette arrives later here than in town. So everyone asks nothing better than to return there, and you shall embrace me, I hope, in four or five days. But what makes me uneasy is that four or five days make I don't know how many hours, several of which are reserved for the philosopher. For the philosopher, do you hear me, Cousin? Remember it is for him only that all those hours are supposed to strike.

Now don't go blushing at that and lowering your eyes. For you it is im-

possible to assume a serious mien; it doesn't go with your features. You know full well that I can't weep without laughing, and am not for that less sensible; it distresses me no less to be far from you; I do not mourn the good Chaillot any less. I am infinitely grateful for your willingness to share the care of her family with me; I will never in all my days abandon them, but you would no longer be yourself if you lost some opportunity for doing good. I agree that poor Mie[13] babbled too much, was rather free with her familiar talk, hardly discrete with young maidens, and liked to recall old times. Indeed it is not so much her qualities of mind I miss, even though she had some excellent ones amidst the bad. The loss I mourn in her is her good heart, her perfect attachment that gave her for me both a mother's tenderness and a sister's confidence. She stood me in stead of my whole family; my mother I scarce knew; my father loves me as much as he knows how; we have lost your amiable brother; my own brothers I almost never see. So here I am like an abandoned orphan. My child, I have no one left but you; for your good mother is you. Yet you are right. I have you: I was weeping! Then I was foolish: why should I weep?

P. S. For fear of a mishap, I address this letter to our master,[14] so that it will more surely reach you.

*LETTER VIII**

To Julie

What, fair Julie, are the strange caprices of love! My heart has more than it hoped for, and is not content. You love me, you tell me so, and I sigh. This unfair heart dares desire still more, when it has nothing more to desire; it punishes me for its fantasies, and makes me uneasy in the bosom of happiness. Do not think I have forgotten the laws imposed on me, or lost the will to observe them; no, yet a secret spite nettles me in seeing that these laws are onerous to me alone, that you who pretended to be so weak are at present so strong, and that I have so few battles to wage against myself, so attentive do I find you to forestall them.

How changed you are these last two months, without anything having changed except you! Your languor has disappeared; there is no more talk of apathy or dejection; all the graces have resumed their posts; all your charms have revived; the freshly bloomed rose is no fresher than you; the

* One can tell there is a lacuna here, and there will be others in the course of the correspondence. Several letters have been lost; others have been suppressed; others have suffered curtailment: but nothing essential is missing that cannot easily be supplied with the help of what remains.

repartees are back; you are witty with everyone; you frolic, even with me as formerly; and, what irritates me more than all the rest, is that you swear me everlasting love as blithely as if you were uttering the most amusing thing in the world.

Tell me, tell me, my fickle one? Is this the character of a violent passion reduced to warring with itself, and if you had the slightest desire to overcome, would not the effort at least stifle your playfulness? Oh how much more lovable you were when you were less lovely! How I miss that touching pallor, the cherished sign of a lover's happiness, and how I hate the conspicuous health you have recovered at the expense of my peace of mind! Yes, I had rather you still were ill than to see that contented air, those sparkling eyes, that blooming complexion that are an insult to me. Have you so soon forgotten that you were not like that when you were begging me for mercy? Julie, Julie! How tranquil has so keen a love become in little time!

But what offends me even more, is that after committing yourself to my discretion, you seem to mistrust it, and that you flee dangers as if you still had something to fear. Is this how you honor my restraint, and did my inviolable respect merit from you such an affront? Far from your father's departure having left us more liberty, you can hardly be seen alone. Your inseparable Cousin never leaves your side. Insensibly we are returning to our first ways together and our former circumspection, with this sole difference, that then you found it burdensome and now you like it.

What then will be the reward for so pure an homage if it is not your esteem, and what good to me is perpetual and voluntary abstinence from all that is sweetest in the world if she who demands it is wholly ungrateful to me? To be sure, I am weary of needless suffering, and of inflicting on myself the harshest denial without even being credited for it. What! must you with impunity become more and more beautiful while you are scorning me? Must my eyes continually devour charms my lips dare not approach? Must I in sum relinquish all hope, without being able at least to take pride in such a stringent sacrifice? No, since you no longer trust yourself to my good faith, I no longer wish to leave it vainly engaged; the security you derive at once from my word and from your precautions is an unjust one; you are too ungrateful or I am too scrupulous, and I no longer mean to refuse from fortune's hands the opportunities you cannot withhold from her. Finally, whatever the consequences for me, I feel I have assumed an obligation that exceeds my strength. Julie, take back your own guardianship; I return to you a trust too dangerous for the faithfulness of the trustee, the defense of which will cost your heart less than you feigned to fear.

I say this in earnest; rely upon yourself, or oust me, that is, take my life.

I have made a rash commitment. I wonder how I have been able to keep it so long; I know I still should, but I feel I cannot. Anyone who takes on such perilous duties deserves defeat. Believe me, dear and tender Julie, believe this sensible heart that lives for you alone; you will forever be respected; but my reason may fail me for a moment, and the intoxication of the senses might dictate a crime which one would abhor in a calmer state. Fortunate not to have betrayed your hope, I have held out for two months, and you owe me the price of two centuries of torment.

LETTER IX

From Julie

I see: with the pleasures of vice and the honor of virtue you would not complain of your lot? Is that your moral?..... Ah! my good friend, your generosity tires very quickly! Was it then only an artifice? What a singular sign of attachment, for you to complain of my health! Could it be that you hoped my foolish love would utterly destroy it, and that you were waiting until I would have to beg you for my life? Or rather, were you planning to respect me so long as I was hideous, and take back your word when I should become bearable? I do not see in such sacrifices any merit so worth vaunting.

With as much equity you reproach me for the trouble I am taking to spare you painful struggles with yourself, as if you should not rather thank me for it. Then, you retract the commitment you have assumed, as too burdensome a duty; so that in the same letter you complain of suffering too much, and not enough. Think better on it and try to be more attuned with yourself, to lend a less frivolous coloration to your alleged grievances. Or rather, drop all this dissembling which is not in your character. Say what you will, your heart is more satisfied with mine than it pretends to be. Ingrate, you know too well that for you it will never be at fault! Your letter itself betrays you with its bantering style, and you would not be so witty if you were less at ease. That's enough about the vain reproaches having to do with you; let us now pass on to those that have to do with me, and which at the outset seem better grounded.

I am well aware of it; the bland and placid life we have been leading these last two months does not accord with my earlier declaration, and I concede it is not without reason that you are surprised by this contrast. At first you saw me in despair; now you find me too composed; whence you complain that my sentiments are inconstant and my heart capricious. Ah my friend! are you not judging it too harshly? Getting to know it takes

more than a day. Wait, and you will perhaps find that this heart that loves you is not unworthy of yours.

If you could understand with what terror I experienced the first symptoms of the sentiment that binds me to you, you would have an idea of the anguish it must have caused me. I was reared in accordance with maxims[15] so severe that the purest love appeared to me the height of dishonor. Everything taught me or led me to believe that a maiden of any sensibility was undone at the first tender word that escaped her lips; my troubled imagination confused crime with the confession of passion; and I had such a horrible notion of that first step that I could scarcely see any interval between it and the last. Excessive misgivings about myself increased my alarm, I thought the struggles of modesty were struggles of chastity: I mistook tormented silence for impetuous desires. I thought I would be undone the minute I spoke, and yet I had either to speak or lose you. So, no longer able to disguise my sentiments, I tried to appeal to the generosity of yours, and relying more on you than on myself, I tried, by engaging your honor in my defense, to marshall resources I thought I did not have available.

I have recognized that I was wrong; I had no sooner spoken than I felt relieved; you had no sooner replied than I felt perfectly calm, and two months' experience have taught me that my too tender heart needs love, but that my senses have no need of a lover. Imagine, you who love virtue, with what joy I made this happy discovery. Relieved of the profound infamy into which my terror had plunged me, I savor the delightful pleasure of loving in all purity. This state makes my life's happiness; it benefits my temper and my health; I can scarcely conceive a more blissful one, and the harmony of love and innocence is paradise on earth to me.

From that time forth I feared you no longer; and when I took care to avoid being alone with you, it was as much for your sake as for mine; for your eyes and sighs betrayed more transports than propriety, and had you forgotten your own decree, I would not have.

Ah my friend, would I could infuse into your soul the sentiment of happiness and peace that prevails in the depths of mine! Would I could only teach you to enjoy in tranquillity life's most delightful state! The charms of the union of hearts join for us with those of innocence; no fear, no shame disrupts our felicity; in the bosom of love's true pleasures we can speak of virtue without blushing,

E v'è il piacere con l'onestade accanto.[16]

And pleasure is joined to honor.

Some sad foreboding arises in my breast and cries to me that we are enjoying the only happy times Heaven may have allotted us. For the future I

can glimpse only absence, tempests, troubles, contradictions. To me the slightest alteration of our present situation can only be for the worse. No, even were a sweeter bond to unite us forever, I know not whether the surfeit of happiness would not soon be its demise. The moment of possession is a crisis for love, and any change is dangerous for ours; from now on we can only lose by it.

I implore you, my tender and unique friend, try to calm the intoxication of vain desires that are always attended by regret, repentance, and sorrow. Let us peaceably enjoy our present situation. You delight in giving me instruction, and you know too well that I delight in receiving your lessons. Let us make them even more frequent; let us separate for only as long as propriety requires; let us spend in writing to each other the moments we cannot spend together, and let us take advantage of a precious time for which we shall long, perhaps, some day. Ah may our lot as it is endure as long as our lives! We adorn our minds, enlighten our reason, strengthen our souls, our hearts exult: what more could we want to be happy?

LETTER X

To Julie

How right you are, my Julie, to say I do not yet know you! I always think I know all your beautiful soul's treasures, and I always discover new ones. What woman ever joined as you do tenderness with virtue, and tempering the one with the other made both more enchanting? There is something ineffably attaching and attractive to me in the very propriety that so dismays me, and you embellish the privations you impose on me with such graces that you very nearly make me cherish them.

I feel it more strongly each day, there is no greater good than to be loved by you; there is none, nor can there be, to equal it, and if I had to choose between your heart and possessing your person, charming Julie, I would not hesitate an instant. But whence such a bitter choice, and why render incompatible what nature meant to join? This time is precious, you say, let us enjoy it as it is, and let not our impatience disrupt its peaceful course. Oh! may it pass and may it be happy! To take advantage of a pleasant state, must we renounce a better one, and prefer tranquillity to supreme felicity? Is not all time wasted which one could better employ? Ah, if one can live a thousand years in a quarter-hour, what good will it do to count up sadly the days one has lived?

Everything you say about the happiness of our present situation is undeniable; I feel we ought to be happy, and yet I am not. Though wisdom speak through your mouth, nature's voice is the stronger. How can I resist it when it accords with the heart's? Except for you alone I see nothing in this terrestrial abode worthy to occupy my soul and my senses; no, without you nature is nothing to me: but her empire is in your eyes, and that is where she is invincible.

Such is not your case, celestial Julie; you are content to charm our senses and are not at war with your own. It seems that human passions are beneath a soul so sublime, and as you possess the beauty of Angels, you possess their purity also. O purity that I respect with a murmur, why can I not either bring you down or raise myself up to you! But no, I shall always grovel on the ground and always see you shining in the Heavens. Ah! be happy at the expense of my own peace of mind; exult in all your virtues; perish the vile mortal who ever tries to sully a single one of them. Be happy, I shall try to forget how I am to be pitied, and shall derive from your very happiness the consolation for my woes. Yes, dear Lover, it seems to me that my love is as perfect as its adorable object; all the desires enflamed by your charms die out in the perfections of your soul; I see it so serene that I dare not disrupt its tranquillity. Whenever I am tempted to steal the least caress from you, while the risk of offending you holds me back, my heart holds me back even more for fear of tainting a felicity so pure; in the price of the things to which I aspire, I consider only what they might cost you, and not being able to make my happiness accord with yours—judge how I love!—it is mine I have renounced.

How many inexplicable contradictions there are in the sentiments you inspire in me! I am at once submissive and bold, impetuous and restrained, I cannot lift my eyes upon you without experiencing a struggle within. Your eyes, your voice convey to the heart along with love the touching attraction of innocence; it is a divine charm one would destroy with regret. If I dare imagine outrageous things it is now only in your absence; my desires, not daring to extend to you, are addressed to your image, and upon it I avenge the respect I am obliged to show to you.

Yet I languish and waste away; fire courses through my veins; nothing can extinguish or damp it, and I stir it up by trying to contain it. I ought to be happy, I am, I grant that; I complain not of my fate; even as it is I would not trade with the Kings of the earth. Yet a real torment pursues me, I seek in vain to flee it; I would not wish to die, and yet I am dying; I would wish to live for you, and it is you who deprive me of life.

LETTER XI

From Julie

My friend, I feel I am each day more attached to you; I can no longer separate myself from you, the slightest absence is unbearable to me, and I must see you or write to you in order to be continually absorbed with you.

Thus my love grows with yours; for I now recognize how much you love me by the real fear you have of displeasing me, whereas at first it was merely in appearance, the better to achieve your ends. I am fully capable of distinguishing the empire the heart has been able to establish from the frenzy of an overheated imagination, and I see a hundred times more passion in your present constraint than in your previous throes. I also know full well that your condition, uncomfortable as it is, is not without pleasures. It is sweet for a genuine lover to make sacrifices that are all to his credit, and none of which is lost in his beloved's heart. Who knows whether, knowing my sensibility, you are not employing an even more clever form of ruse to seduce me? But no, I am unjust and you are incapable of artifice with me. And yet, if I am wise, I will be even more wary of pity than of love. I feel a thousand times more affected by your respect than by your transports, and I greatly fear that in making the more honest choice, you may ultimately have chosen the most dangerous one.

While my heart is overflowing I must tell you a truth it feels strongly, and of which yours must persuade you: it is that in spite of fortune, parents, and ourselves, our destinies are forever united, and we can no longer be either happy or unhappy if not together. Our souls have, so to speak, touched at every point, and we have everywhere felt the same cohesion. (Correct me, my friend, if I misapply your physics lessons.) Fate may well separate us, but not disunite us. We shall henceforth know only the same pleasures and sorrows; and like the magnets you told me about, which, it is said, move the same way in different locations, we would feel the same things at opposite extremities of the earth.

Rid yourself therefore of the hope, if you ever entertained it, of finding individual happiness, and purchasing it at the expense of mine. Do not hope you could be happy if I were dishonored, nor that you could with a satisfied eye witness my infamy and tears. Believe me, my friend, I know your heart much better than you do. A love so tender and true must know the art of mastering desires; you have gone too far to continue on without bringing your own destruction, and can no longer consummate my misfortune without bringing about your own.

I wish you could appreciate how much it matters to us both that you rely on me to look after our common destiny. Do you doubt that you are as dear to me as myself; and do you think there could exist for me a felicity you did not share? No, my friend, I have the same interests as you and a bit more reason with which to manage them. I admit I am the younger; but have you never noticed that if reason is generally weaker and sooner to wane in women, it is also formed earlier, just as a frail sunflower grows and dies quicker than an oak. We find ourselves, from the tenderest age, assigned such a dangerous trust, that the responsibility of preserving it soon awakens our judgment, and an excellent way to see clearly the consequences of things is to feel intensely the risks they cause us to run. For me, the more I reflect on our situation, the more I find that reason asks of you what I ask of you in the name of love. Be therefore obedient to her sweet voice, and let yourself be led, alas, by another blind person, but at least one who has something to lean on.

I do not know, my friend, whether our hearts will have the good fortune to understand each other, and whether you will share in reading this Letter the tender emotion that has dictated it. I do not know whether we will ever be able to agree on our manner of seeing as in our manner of feeling; but I know for certain that the opinion of whichever of us least distinguishes his own happiness from the other's is the one to be preferred.

LETTER XII

To Julie

My Julie, how touching is the simplicity of your letter! How plainly do I perceive in it the serenity of an innocent soul, and the tender solicitude of love! Your thoughts issue forth artlessly and effortlessly; they bear to the heart a delightful impression which a contrived style does not produce. You proffer invincible reasons in such a simple way that it takes reflection to feel their force, and lofty sentiments come so easily to you that one is tempted to mistake them for common modes of thinking. Ah, yes without a doubt, it is you who must determine our destinies; it is not a right I relinquish to you, but a duty I exact of you, a justice I demand of you, and your reason must compensate me for the harm you have done mine. From this moment I remit to you for life dominion over my will: dispose of me as a man who no longer exists in his own right, and whose whole being relates only to you. I shall keep, doubt it not, the commitment I am making, no matter what you prescribe. Either I shall be the better for it, or you the happier, and in both cases I am assured of the reward for my obedience. I

therefore remit unreservedly to you the custody of our common happiness; attend to yours, and that is all that is needed. As for me who can neither forget you for an instant, nor think about you without transports I must master, I shall be completely absorbed by the duties you have imposed upon me.

In the year that we have been studying together, we have done scarcely anything but disconnected and almost random readings, more to consult your taste than to enlighten it. Moreover such turmoil in the soul hardly left us any freedom of spirit. The eyes were ill fixed on the book, the mouth uttered the words in it, attention was always wanting. Your little cousin, who was not so preoccupied, used to scold us for our poor grasp of the subject, and claimed the easy honor of outpacing us. Imperceptibly she has become the master's master, and although we have sometimes laughed at her pretensions, she is really the only one of us three who knows anything about all we have learned.

To make up then for lost time (Ah, Julie, was ever time better spent?), I have thought up a sort of program to repair through method the wrong which distractions have done to knowledge. I am sending it to you; soon we shall read it together, and I shall limit myself here to a few minor observations.

If we meant, my charming friend, to burden ourselves with a show of erudition, and possess learning more for others than for ourselves, my system would be worthless; for it always aims at getting a little out of many things, and making a small collection from a large library. For most of those who seek it, science is a currency much in demand, yet which contributes to well-being only insofar as it is transmitted, and is valid only for trade. Take away from our Men of science the pleasure of making others listen: knowledge will be nothing to them. They make provision in their study only to pour forth to the public; they wish to be wise only in the eyes of others, and would no longer bother studying if they no longer had admirers.*[17] We who wish to profit from our knowledge, do not store it up in order to resell it, but to convert it to our own use, not to burden but to sustain ourselves with it. To read little, and reflect much on our readings, or what amounts to the same thing, to talk a lot about them between us, is the way to digest them well. I think that once the habit of reflection has opened up one's understanding, it is always better to find on one's own the things one would find in books: this is the true secret of molding them to one's own mind and appropriating them. Whereas by accepting them as they are given to us, they are almost always in a shape which is not

* So thought Seneca himself. *If I were given science*, he said, *on condition it not be revealed, I would want nothing to do with it*. Sublime philosophy, to such a use art thou put!

ours.[18] We are richer than we think, but, says Montaigne, we are trained to borrow and beg; we are taught to use others' goods rather than our own,[19] or rather, while endlessly accumulating we dare not touch anything: we are like those misers who are solely preoccupied with filling their granaries, and who in the belly of abundance let themselves die of hunger.

There are, I concede, many people for whom this method would be quite harmful and who need to read much and reflect little, because being wrong-headed, they garner nothing so bad as what they produce by themselves. I recommend just the opposite to you, for what you put into your readings is better than what you find in them, and your active mind makes from the book another book, sometimes better than the first. We shall therefore share our ideas; I shall tell you what the others have thought, you will tell me on the same subject what you yourself think, and often I shall end the lesson more knowledgeable than you.

The less reading you have to do, the more carefully it will have to be chosen, and here are the reasons for my choice. The great mistake of those who study is, as I have just said, to place too much trust in their books and not draw enough on their own resources; without considering that of all Sophists, our own reason is almost always the one that deceives us the least. As soon as we are willing to search within ourselves, we all sense what is right, we all discern what is beautiful; we have no need to be taught either one, and on that score we mislead ourselves only as much as we wish to. But examples of the very good and the very beautiful are rarer and less familiar; they must be sought far from ourselves. Vanity, measuring nature's forces by our weakness, leads us to consider as fanciful those qualities which we do not perceive in ourselves; laziness and vice take strength from this alleged impossibility, and the weak man claims that what is not seen every day is never to be found at all. This is the error that must be destroyed. These are the great objects we must accustom ourselves to feel and see, so as to remove all pretext for failing to imitate them. The soul soars, the heart catches fire in the contemplation of these divine models; by meditating on them at length we try to become like them, and can no longer suffer anything mediocre without utter disgust.

Let us therefore not go searching in books for principles and rules that we more surely find within ourselves. Let us leave aside all these idle disputes of the philosophers about happiness and virtue; let us use to make ourselves good and happy the time they waste wondering how one goes about it, and let us take for ourselves great examples to imitate rather than vain systems to follow.

I have always believed that the good was nothing but the beautiful put into action, that the one was intimately connected to the other, and that

both had a common source in a well-ordered nature. It follows from this idea that taste is perfected by the same means as wisdom, and that a soul quite moved by the charms of virtue must be proportionately sensible to all other kinds of beauty. One practices seeing as well as sensing, or rather exquisite vision is but a delicate and refined sentiment. So it is that a painter beholding a beautiful landscape or standing before a beautiful tableau is enraptured by objects that are not even noticed by the common Observer. How many things are there which one perceives only through sentiment and which one cannot account for? How many of those uncertain intuitions that so frequently recur and about which taste alone decides? Taste is in a way the microscope of judgment; it is taste that brings small objects within its reach, and its operations begin where those of the latter end. What then is required to cultivate it? To practice seeing as well as feeling, and to judge beauty by inspection as well as good by sentiment. No, I maintain that not all hearts even have the capacity to be moved at the first look from Julie.

This, my charming Schoolgirl, is why I am limiting your field of studies to books of good taste and morality. That is why, transforming my whole method into examples, I give you no other definition of virtues than a tableau of virtuous people, nor other rules for writing well than books that are well written.

Do not therefore wonder at the abridgments I am making in your earlier readings; I am convinced that they must be reduced in order to make them more useful, and I see better every day that whatever speaks nothing to the soul is unworthy of your attention. We are going to drop languages, except for Italian, which you know and like. We shall leave aside our elements of algebra and geometry. We would even drop physics if I had the courage, in view of the terminology it supplies you.[20] We will renounce modern history forever, except that of our own country; even then it is only because it is a free and simple country, where ancient men are to be found in modern times: for you must not be impressed by those who say that the most worthwhile history for everyone is the history of his own country. That is not true. There are countries whose history cannot even be read, except by an imbecile or a negotiator. The most worthwhile history is that which furnishes the most examples, mores, characters of every type; in a word, the most instruction. They will tell you that there is as much of all that among us as among the ancients. That is not true. Open their history and silence them. There are peoples without physiognomy who have no need of painters, there are governments without character that have no need of historians, and where once the position a man occupies is known, everything he will do in it is known in advance. They will

say that we are simply short on good historians; but ask them why? That is not true. Furnish material for good histories, and good historians will be found.[21] Finally, they will say that men in all ages are alike, that they have the same virtues and the same vices, that we admire the ancients only because they are ancient. That is not true either; for men formerly accomplished great things with small means, and today we do just the opposite. The ancients were their historians' contemporaries, and have nonetheless taught us to admire them. Assuredly if posterity ever admires ours, it will not have learned it from us.

I have retained out of deference to your inseparable Cousin a few minor literary works I would not have retained for you. Except for Petrarch, Tasso, Metastasio, and the masters of French theater,[22] I include neither poets nor books of love,[23] contrary to the customary readings intended for your Sex. What would we learn about love from these books? Ah, Julie, our hearts tell us more than they do, and language borrowed from books is surely cold to anyone who is himself impassioned! Moreover such study numbs the soul, casts it into indolence, and divests it of its energy. On the contrary, genuine love is a raging fire that carries its heat into the other sentiments, and breathes into them a new vigor. That is why it has been said that love made Heroes. Happy the man whom fate had situated to become one, and who has Julie for his lover!

LETTER XIII

From Julie

Just as I told you, we are happy as we are; nothing makes it clearer to me than the vexation I experience at the slightest change of situation. If our sufferings were really acute, would two days' absence make us suffer so? I say us, for I know my friend shares my impatience; he shares it because I feel it, and he feels it too on his own account: I no longer need for him to tell me such things.

We have been in the country only since yesterday evening; the hour has not yet come when I would be seeing you in town, and yet my displacement already makes me find your absence more unbearable. If you had not forbidden me geometry, I would tell you that my restlessness is proportional to the compound intervals of time and place; so greatly do I find that distance adds to the sorrow of absence!

I have brought along your Letter and your program of study, to contemplate the one and the other, and I have already reread the former twice: I am especially moved by the ending. I can see, my friend, that the love

you feel is genuine, since it has not deprived you of your taste for honest things, and you still know in the most sensible part of your heart how to make sacrifices to virtue. Indeed, to use the path of instruction to corrupt a woman is of all seductions the most reprehensible; and to attempt to move the heart of one's mistress to love with the help of novels is to have very few resources of one's own. Had you in your lessons bent philosophy to your aims, had you tried to establish maxims favorable to your interests, then in attempting to deceive me you would soon have undeceived me; but the most dangerous of your seductions is to use none. From the moment the thirst for love swept my heart away and I felt it being filled with the need for an eternal attachment, I asked Heaven to unite me not with a likeable man, but rather with a man with a beautiful soul; for I felt that this is surely, of all the attractive qualities one can possess, the one least subject to disaffection, and that uprightness and honor embellish all the sentiments they accompany. Having well placed my preference, I have like Solomon obtained, along with what I had asked for, that also which I asked not.[24] I take the fulfillment of this wish as a good omen for my other ones, and I do not despair, my friend, of being able one day to make you as happy as you deserve to be. The means to do so are slow, difficult, doubtful, the obstacles formidable. I dare not promise myself anything; but you may be sure that nothing that patience and love can do will be overlooked. Continue, meanwhile, to cultivate my mother in every way, and prepare yourself, at the return of my father who at last is retiring altogether after thirty years' service, to endure the haughtiness of an old gentleman who is brusque but full of honor, who will like you without outward signs and esteem you without saying it.

I have broken off my Letter to go for a walk in the woods that are close by our house. O my sweet friend! I took you along with me, or rather I bore you in my breast. I picked out the spots where we should wander about together; I noted the sanctuaries worthy of a pause; our hearts overflowed in advance in those delightful retreats, they added to the pleasure we tasted in being together, they in turn received a new value as the haven of two true lovers, and I marveled that I had not discovered alone the beauties that I found there with you.

Among the natural bowers this enchanting place offers, there is one more enchanting than the others, which I especially like, and where, for this reason, I am preparing a little surprise for my friend. It shall not be said that he must ever show deference and I never generosity. That is where I want to make him feel, in spite of vulgar prejudices, how greatly what the heart gives surpasses what insistence seizes. Nonetheless, lest your vivid imagination put itself out a bit too much, I must warn you that we will not go to the bower together without the *inseparable Cousin*.

Now that I have mentioned her, it has been decided, if you don't mind too much, that you shall come to see us on Monday. My mother will send her calèche[25] to my Cousin; you shall go to her place at ten; she will bring you; you shall spend the day with us, and we shall all return together the next day after dinner.

I was at this point in my letter when it occurred to me that I did not have the same facility for delivering it to you as I do in town. I had first thought I would send one of your books back to you with Gustin the Gardener's son, and put on the book a paper covering, into which I would insert my letter. But, aside from the fact that it might not occur to you to look for it, it would be an unpardonable imprudence to expose our lives' destiny to such accidents. I shall therefore be content simply to specify Monday's appointment in a note, and I shall hold on to the letter to give it to you myself. Besides, I should be a little concerned lest you gloss a little too extensively the secret of the bower.

LETTER XIV

To Julie

What have you done, ah! what have you done, my Julie? You meant to reward me and you have undone me. I am drunk, or rather insane. My senses are impaired, all my faculties are deranged by that fatal kiss. You meant to alleviate my sufferings? Cruel woman, you make them sharper. It is poison I have culled from your lips; it festers, it sets my blood afire, it kills me, and your pity is the death of me.

O immortal memory of that moment of illusion, of delirium and enchantment, never, never shalt thou fade in my soul, and so long as Julie's charms are engraved therein, so long as this troubled heart furnishes me sentiments and sighs, thou shalt be the torture and happiness of my life!

Alas! I was enjoying an apparent tranquillity; submissive to your supreme commands, I no longer murmured at a fate over which you deigned to preside. I had tamed the impetuous outbursts of an audacious imagination; I had put a veil over my glances and hobbled my heart; my desires dared only half express themselves, I was as content as I could be. I received your note, I flew to your Cousin; we went to Clarens, I saw you, and my breast throbbed; the sweet sound of your voice brought it renewed agitation; I approached you as if enraptured, and I sorely needed your cousin's diversion to conceal my disarray from your mother. We strolled about the garden, we dined quietly, you surreptitiously gave me your letter which I dared not read in front of that redoubtable witness; the sun was beginning to go down, the three of us fled its last rays into the

woods, and in my untroubled simplicity I did not even imagine a state more blissful than mine.

Upon approaching the bower I perceived, not without a secret emotion, your signals of complicity, your mutual smiles, and I saw the color of your cheeks take on a new flush. As we entered it, I had the surprise of seeing your cousin come up to me and in a playfully suppliant manner ask me for a kiss. Apprehending nothing of this enigma I kissed that charming friend, and as fetching, as saucy as she is, I never better perceived that sensations are only what the heart makes them. But what became of me a moment later, when I felt..... my hand is shaking..... a gentle tremor..... your rosy lips..... Julie's lips..... alighting on mine, pressing mine, and my body clasped in your arms? Nay, heaven's fire is not more hot nor more sudden than that which instantly engulfed me. Every part of me came together under that delightful touch. Our burning lips breathed out fire with our sighs, and my heart was fainting away under the weight of ecstasy.... when all of a sudden I saw you turn pale, close your beautiful eyes, lean on your cousin, and fall in a swoon.[26] Thus alarm extinguished pleasure, and my happiness was no more than a flash.

I scarcely know anything I have done since that fatal moment. The deep impression I have received can no longer fade away. A favor?..... it is a horrible torment..... No, keep your kisses, they are too much for me to bear..... they are too acrid,[27] too penetrating, they pierce, they burn to the marrow..... they would drive me raving mad. Just one, just one has thrown me into a distraction which I can never get over. I am no longer the same, and no longer see you the same. I no longer see you, as formerly, repressive and severe; but I feel and touch you constantly joined to my breast as you were for a moment. O Julie! whatever fate is portended by a transport I can no longer master, whatever treatment your rigor has in store for me, I can live no longer in my present state, and sense that I must ultimately expire at your feet..... or in your arms.

LETTER XV

From Julie

It is important, my friend, that we separate for some time, and here is the first test of the obedience you have promised me. If I insist on it in the present circumstance, rest assured that I have very strong reasons for it: I would have to have, and you know it only too well, in order to resign myself to it; as for you, you require none other than my will.

1. Love's first kiss.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

For a long time you have needed to take a journey to the Valais.[28] I should like you to consider undertaking it now while it is not yet cold. Although autumn is still pleasant here, you can already see the tip of the Dent-de-Jamant*[29] turning white, and in six weeks I would not let you make the journey through such rugged countryside. Try therefore to set out as of tomorrow: you will write to me at the address I am sending you, and you will send me yours once you have arrived in Sion.[30]

You have always refused to acquaint me with the state of your affairs; but you are not in your fatherland[31]; I know that you have little fortune there and are only making it worse here, where you would not remain except for me. I may therefore suppose that a part of your purse depends on mine, and the one contained in the accompanying case I am sending you, which you must not open in the presence of the bearer, represents a small down payment. I shall not bother countering objections; I think too highly of you to think you capable of making any.

I forbid you, not only to return without my orders, but also to come bid us farewell. You may write to my mother or to me, simply to notify us that you are obliged to leave at once on an unexpected errand, and give me, if you wish, some instructions regarding my studies until your return. That must all be done naturally and without the least appearance of mystery. Farewell, my friend, do not forget that you take with you Julie's heart and peace of mind.

LETTER XVI

Reply

I reread your ominous letter, and I shudder at each line. I shall obey, however, I have promised, I must do so; I shall obey. But you do not know, nay, heartless Julie, you will never know what such a sacrifice costs my heart. Ah, you did not need the trial of the bower to make me aware of it! That is a refinement of cruelty that is lost on your pitiless soul, and at least I can defy you to make me more miserable still.

You shall receive your case in the same state in which you sent it. It is too much to compound cruelty with ignominy; if I have left you mistress of my fate, I have not made you arbiter of my honor. That is a sacred trust (the only one, alas, I have left!), for which no one to the end of my life shall be responsible but me.

* A high mountain in the Vaud country.

LETTER XVII

Rejoinder

Your letter is pathetic; it is the only witless thing you have ever written.

So I offend your honor, for which I would a thousand times give my life? So I offend your honor, Ingrate! you who have seen me on the point of abandoning mine to you? Where is then this honor I am offending? Tell me, grovelling heart, undiscriminating soul? Ah! how despicable you are, if your only honor is one Julie is unacquainted with! What, those who mean to share a common fate should not dare to share their possessions, and he who professes to be mine considers himself insulted by my gifts! And since when is it degrading to accept something from one's beloved? Since when does what the heart gives dishonor the heart that receives: but is a man despised if he accepts something from another? Is he despised whose needs exceed his fortune? And despised by whom? By abject souls who place honor in riches, and weigh virtues by their weight in gold. Is it in such base maxims that a man of honor places his honor, and is not the prejudice of reason itself in favor of the poorer man?

Undoubtedly, there are ignoble gifts that an honorable man cannot accept; but know that they dishonor no less the hand that offers them, and that a gift that is honest to give is always honest to receive; now surely my heart does not reproach me this one, it glories in it.* I know nothing more despicable than a man whose heart and attentions can be bought, unless it is the woman who pays for them; but between two united hearts community of property is justice and duty, and if I find myself still in arrears with respect to the portion I hold above yours, I accept without scruple what I retain, and owe you what I have not given you. Ah! if gifts of love are a burden, what heart can ever be grateful?

Are you supposing that I am denying to my own needs what I reserve to provide for yours? I am going to give you an irrefutable proof of the contrary. It is that the purse I am sending back to you contains twice what it did the first time, and that if I wanted to I could double it again. For my upkeep my Father gives me an allowance that is, to be sure, modest, but which I never have to touch, so attentive is my mother to providing for everything, besides the fact that my embroidery and lace-making supply my needs in both. It is true that I was not always so rich; preoccupation with a fatal passion has long caused me to neglect certain duties on which

* She is right. From the secret motive of this journey, it can be seen that money was never put to more honest use. It is a great pity that this use was not more profitable.

I used to spend my leftover money; that is another reason for disposing of it as I am doing: I must humiliate you for the evil you cause, and love must atone for the sins it occasions.

Let us come to the point. You say that honor forbids you to accept my gifts. If that is so, I have nothing further to say, and I agree with you that you must not entrust such a burden to anyone else. If therefore you can prove that to me, do it clearly, indisputably, and without vain subtlety; for you know I detest sophistry. Then you can give me back the purse, I shall take it without complaining, and nothing more will be said about it.

But as I like neither punctilious persons nor false points of honor,[32] if you send the case back to me one more time without justification, or if your justification is poor, we must never see each other again. Farewell; consider that.

LETTER XVIII

To Julie

I have received your gifts, I departed without seeing you, now here I am very far from you. Are you satisfied with your tyranny, and have I obeyed you well enough?

I cannot tell you about my journey; I scarcely know how it went. It took me three days to cover twenty leagues; every step that distanced me from you separated my body from my soul and gave me an intimation of death. I meant to describe for you what I would see. Vain intention! I have seen nothing but you and can depict nothing but Julie. The powerful emotions I have just experienced one after the other have thrown me into continual distractions; I felt I was always somewhere I was not; I had scarcely enough presence of mind to pursue and ask after my route, and I have arrived at Sion without leaving Vevey.[33]

So it is that I have found the secret of eluding your severity and seeing you without disobeying you. Yes, cruel Julie, whatever you have managed to do, you have not been able to separate me from you entirely. I have trailed only the lesser part of myself into exile; all that is living in me remains still by your side. It wanders with impunity over your eyes, your lips, your breast, over all your charms; it penetrates everywhere like a subtle vapor, and I am happier in spite of you, than I ever was with your consent.

Here I have a few people to see, a few affairs to settle; that is what saddens me. I am not to be pitied when I am in solitude, when I can occupy myself with you and be transported to the places where you are. The active

life that recalls me entirely to myself is alone unbearable. I am going to act carelessly and quickly, so as to be the more promptly at liberty, and free to roam at will through the wild places which to my eyes constitute the charm of this country. One must flee everyone and live alone on earth, if one cannot live with you.

LETTER XIX

To Julie

Nothing detains me here but your orders; the five days I have spent here have more than sufficed for my affairs; if, that is, one can call affairs dealings in which the heart has no part. At last you have no more pretext, and can keep me far from you only to torment me.

I am beginning to worry considerably about the fate of my first letter; it was written and posted on my arrival; the address was faithfully copied from the one you sent me; I sent you mine with equal care, and if you had replied punctually, it should already have reached me. Yet this reply does not come, and there is no possible dire reason for its delay that my troubled spirit does not imagine. O my Julie, in one week how many unforeseen catastrophes can break forever the world's sweetest bonds! I shudder when I remind myself that for me there is only one way to be happy, and millions of ways to be miserable.*[34] Julie, could it be you have forgotten me? Ah! that is the awfullest of my fears! I can firm up my courage against other misfortunes, but my soul's strength completely falters at the very intimation of that one.

I see how ill-founded are my alarms, and am incapable of calming them. I feel my sufferings ever more bitterly far from you, and as if I did not already have enough to dishearten me, I fashion new, uncertain ones to aggravate all the others. At first, my anxieties were less intense. The commotion of a sudden departure, the turmoil of travelling, kept my mind off my troubles; in peaceful solitude they revive. Alas! I was struggling; a fatal sword pierced my breast, and the pain made itself felt only long after the wound.

A hundred times have I when reading Novels laughed at lovers' cold moanings over absence. Ah, I did not know then how unbearable yours

* I will be told that it is an Editor's duty to correct language mistakes. Yes to be sure for those Editors who attach some importance to such correction; yes to be sure for works the style of which can be corrected without rewriting and spoiling it; yes to be sure when one is confident enough of one's own pen not to replace the author's mistakes with his own. But given all that, what is to be gained by making a Swiss talk like an Academician?

would be one day! I feel today how little fit a peaceable soul is to judge of passions, and how foolish it is to laugh at sentiments one has never experienced. Yet shall I tell you? Some ineffably consoling and sweet thought tempers my bitterness over the distance between us, when I remind myself that it came about at your command. The sufferings that come from you are less cruel than if they were sent by fortune; if their purpose is to satisfy you I would have no wish not to feel them; they are the warrants of their own compensation, and I know your soul too well to believe you are heartless to no end whatever.

If you mean to test me, I cease to murmur; it is just that you should know whether I am constant, patient, docile, worthy in a word, of what you have in store for me. Ye gods! if such was your intention, I would complain of suffering too little. Ah, no! to entertain such a flattering expectation in my heart, invent if you can sufferings more commensurate with their reward.

LETTER XX

From Julie

I have received both your Letters at once, and perceive from the anxiety you describe in the second concerning the fate of the other that when imagination runs ahead, reason does not scurry after, and often lets it proceed alone. Did you imagine that when you reached Sion a ready Courier would be awaiting only your letter for his departure, that the letter would be delivered to me the moment it arrived here, and that circumstances would no less favor my reply? Such is not the way things work, my fine friend. Your two letters reached me at the same time, because the Courier, who comes only once a week,* set out only with the second.[35] It takes a certain amount of time to deliver letters; it takes more for my agent to bring me mine in secret, and the Courier does not return from here the day after his arrival. Thus all told, we need eight days, when the Courier's day is well chosen, to receive replies from each other; I explain this in order to calm once and for all your impatient petulance. While you are declaiming against fortune and my negligence, you see that I am adroitly gathering information about whatever can assure our correspondence and anticipate your uncertainties. I leave you to decide on which side the most tender care is to be found.

Let us speak no more of pains, my good friend; ah, instead respect and

* By now he comes twice.

share the pleasure I experience, after eight months' absence, at seeing my most excellent Father again! He arrived Thursday evening, and I had nothing but him on my mind* since that happy moment. O you whom I love most on earth next to those who gave me life, why must your letters, your quarrels, bring sadness to my soul, and trouble the first pleasures of a reunited family? You would wish to have my heart continually occupied with you; but tell me, could your heart love a denatured daughter who forgot the rights of blood for the flames of love, and who for the complaints of a lover became insensible to a father's endearments? No, my worthy friend, do not poison with unjust reproaches the innocent joy such a sweet sentiment inspires in me. You whose soul is so tender and so sensible, do you not conceive how charming it is to feel in these pure and sacred embraces a father's breast throbbing with joy against his daughter's? Ah! do you think that the heart could then divide itself for an instant and take anything away from nature?

Sol che son figlia io mi rammento adesso.[36]

All I remember at this moment is that I am his daughter.

Yet do not think I am forgetting you. Did one ever forget what one once loved? No, the more vivid impressions one follows for a few moments do not for that blot out the others. It was not without sorrow that I saw you go, it is not without pleasure that I would see you back. But..... Be patient along with me since we must, without asking more. Be assured I will recall you as soon as I can, and remember that often he who complains loudly of absence is not the one who suffers the most.

LETTER XXI
To Julie

How I suffered upon receiving that letter so ardently wished for! I waited for the Courier at the post-house. The packet was barely open when I gave my name, I became insistent, they told me there was a letter; I shuddered, I asked for it in the throes of mortal impatience: finally I received it. Julie, I perceived the traces of your adored hand! Mine trembled as it reached out for that precious treasure. I would kiss these sacred characters a thousand times. Oh the restraint of a timid lover! I dared not press your Letter to my mouth, nor open it in front of so many witnesses. I scurried off. My knees quivered under me; my growing emotion almost kept me

* The previous paragraph proves she is lying.

from seeing my way; I opened the letter at the first turn in the road; I skimmed it, devoured it, and as soon as I reached the lines where you so well depict your heart's pleasures at embracing that venerable father, I melted in tears, people stared at me, I entered an alley to escape observation; there, I shared your emotion; I embraced with transport that happy father I scarcely know, and the voice of nature reminding me of my own, I shed redoubled tears to his honored memory.

And what did you hope to learn, incomparable daughter, from my vain and sorry knowledge? Ah, it is from you one must learn everything good and honest that can enter a human soul, and above all that divine accord of virtue, love, and nature, that never was found except in you! No, there is no sound affection that has not its place in your heart, that is not distinguished there by your own particular sensibility, and in order myself to know how to regulate mine, as I have subjugated all my actions to your will, I see I also must subjugate all my sentiments to yours.

Yet what a difference from your situation to mine, do please take note! I am not referring to rank and fortune; as to that honor and love must make up for every thing. But you are surrounded with people you cherish and who worship you; the attentions of a tender mother, a father whose unique hope is in you; the friendship of a cousin who seems to breathe only through you; a whole family of which you are the ornament; an entire town proud to have known you from birth, everything occupies and shares your sensibility, and what remains for love is but the least part of what is claimed by the rights of blood and friendship. But I, Julie, alas! wandering, without family, and almost without fatherland, I have no one on earth but you, and love alone stands me in stead of everything. Be not surprised therefore if, though your soul is the more sensible, mine knows better how to love, and if, yielding to you in so many things, I at least capture the prize for love.

Yet you need not fear that I will further importune you with my indiscreet complaints. No, I shall respect your pleasures, both for themselves, as they are so pure, and for you who experience them. I shall create a touching scene in my mind with them; I shall share them from afar, and unable to be happy through my own felicity, I will be through yours. Whatever the reasons that keep me far from you, I respect them; and what good would it do me to know them since, were I to disapprove them, I would nonetheless be constrained to obey the decision they inspire you to take? Will it be more difficult for me to keep silent than it was to leave you? Always remember, O Julie, that your soul has two bodies to govern, and that the one it animates by choice will ever be the most faithful.

nodo piu forte:
Fabricato da noi, non dalla sorte.[37]

The strongest knot,
our own doing and not fate's.

So I hold my tongue, and until it pleases you to end my exile I am going to try to attenuate its tedium by travelling through the mountains of the Valais, while they are still practicable. It strikes me that this neglected country deserves men's attention, and that to be admired it wants nothing but Observers who know how to see it. I shall try to draw from it some observations worthy of pleasing you. To entertain a pretty woman, I would have to depict a gracious and gallant people. But you, my Julie, ah, as I know very well, the tableau of a happy and simple people is the one your heart requires.

LETTER XXII

From Julie

At last the first step has been taken, and your name has come up. Despite the disdain you manifest for my erudition, my father was surprised by it: he showed no less admiration for my progress in music and drawing,* and to the great astonishment of my mother, prejudiced by your calumnies,** and aside from heraldry, which to him seemed neglected,[38] he was quite satisfied with all my talents. But these talents are not acquired without a master; we had to name mine, and I did so with a pompous enumeration of all the sciences he was good enough to teach me, save one. He recalled having seen you several times on his previous journey, and it did not seem he had retained a disadvantageous impression of you.

He then inquired about your fortune; he was told it was modest; about your birth; he was told it was honest. This word *honest* is highly equivocal to a gentleman's ear,[39] and elicited suspicions which clarification confirmed. As soon as he learned that you were not noble, he asked what you were paid per month. My mother speaking up said that such an arrangement could not even be proposed, and that on the contrary, you had constantly rejected all the slightest presents she had tried to make you of a sort that cannot be refused; but this show of pride only provoked his, and how

* There, it seems to me, is a twenty-year-old sage who knows prodigious numbers of things! It is true that Julie congratulates him at thirty for no longer being so learned.

** This relates to a letter to the mother, written in an equivocal tone, which has been suppressed.

could one bear the idea of being in a commoner's debt? It was therefore decided that you would be offered a stipend, the refusal of which, notwithstanding all your merit, which is acknowledged, would get you relieved of your duties. There, my friend, is the gist of a conversation that was held on the subject of my very honored master, and during which his humble pupil was not much at ease. I figured I could not make too much haste to notify you of this, so you would have time to reflect on it. As soon as you have come to a resolution, do not fail to notify me of it; for this item is in your province, and my rights do not extend so far.

It pains me to learn of your excursions in the mountains; not that you do not obtain thereby, in my opinion, an agreeable diversion, and that the detail of what you see will not be quite agreeable to me also: but I fear you will undergo exertions that you are hardly in a condition to sustain. Besides, the season is quite advanced; from one day to the next everything can become covered with snow, and I expect that you have even more to suffer from the cold than from exertion. If you were to fall ill in the country where you are I should never be consoled for it. Return therefore, my good friend, to my neighborhood. It is not time yet to return to Vevey, but I would have you live in a clime less harsh, and for us to be close enough to have news of each other more easily. I leave you master of the choice of your temporary location. Simply take care no one here knows where you are, and be discreet yet not mysterious. I shall have nothing to say on this matter; I shall trust your own interest in being prudent, and even more my own that you should be so.

Farewell my Friend; I cannot converse with you longer. You know what precautions I require to write to you. That is not all. My father has brought with him a venerable stranger, an old friend of his, who once saved his life in battle. You can well imagine what pains we have taken to receive him well! He departs tomorrow, and we are hastening to procure him in the day we have remaining, every sort of entertainment that could best express our zeal for such a benefactor. I am being called: I must finish. Farewell, once more.

LETTER XXIII

To Julie

I have spent scarcely a week travelling through a countryside that would require years of observation: but aside from the fact that the snow is driving me off, I wanted to return in time for the Courier who is, I hope,

bringing me one of your letters. While awaiting it, I begin to write this one, after which I shall if need be write a second to answer yours.

I shall not give you here a detailed account of my journey and remarks; I have made a narrative of them which I intend to bring you. Our correspondence must be reserved for the things that concern each of us most directly. I will limit myself to telling you about the state of my soul: it is only right to give you an account of the use that is made of your property.

I had set out, sad with my woes, and consoled by your joy; which kept me in a certain state of languor that is not without charm for a sensible heart. I climbed slowly, and on foot, paths that were fairly rugged, led by a man I had engaged to be my guide, and in whom throughout the trip I have found rather a friend than a mercenary. I wanted to daydream, and I was always distracted from doing so by some unexpected vista. Sometimes huge cliffs hung like ruins above my head. Sometimes high and thundering waterfalls drenched me in their thick fog. Sometimes a perpetual mountain stream opened by my side an abyss the depth of which eyes dared not fathom. On occasion I got lost in the darkness of a dense wood. On others, on emerging from a chasm a pleasant meadow suddenly delighted my sight. A surprising mixture of wild and cultivated nature revealed throughout the hand of men, where one would have thought they had never penetrated: beside a cave one would find houses; one would see dry vine branches where only brambles would have been expected, grapevines where there had been landslides, excellent fruits among the boulders, and fields on steep inclines.

It was not only man's labor that made this strange countryside so oddly contrasted; nature also seemed to take pleasure in striking an opposition to herself, so different did one find her in the same place at various angles. To the east spring flowers, to the south autumn fruits, to the north the winter ice: she combined all the seasons in the same instant, every climate in the same place, contrary terrains on the same soil, and composed a harmony unknown elsewhere of the products of the plains and of the Alps. Add to all that optical illusions, mountain peaks variously illuminated, the chiaroscuro of sun and shadow, and all the resultant effects of light, morning and evening; you will have some idea of the continual scenes that never ceased to elicit my admiration, and seemed to be presented to me in a true theater; for the prospect of the mountains being vertical strikes the eye all at once and much more powerfully than that of the plains, which can be seen only obliquely, receding into the distance, and in which every object conceals another from view.

During the first day I attributed the calm I felt returning within me to the delights of this variety. I wondered at the empire that the most insensi-

ble beings hold over our most intense passions,[40] and I scorned philosophy for its inability to exert as much power over the soul as a succession of inanimate objects. But this peaceful state having lasted through the night and increased the next day, I soon concluded that it had yet another cause which was not known to me. I reached that day some of the least high mountains, and then following up and down along the crest, the highest of those that were within my capacity. After strolling through the clouds, I reached a more serene site whence one may observe, in season, thunder and storms gathering below: the all too vain image of the wise man's soul, the original of which never existed, or exists only in the very places that have furnished the emblem.

It was there that, in the purity of the air where I found myself, I came to an understanding of the genuine cause of my change of humor, and of the return of that inner peace I for so long had lost. Indeed, it is a general impression experienced by all men, although they do not all notice it, that high in the mountains where the air is pure and subtle, one breathes more freely, one feels lighter in the body, more serene of mind; pleasures there are less intense, passions more moderate. Meditations there take on an indescribably grand and sublime character, in proportion with the objects that strike us, an indescribably tranquil delight that has nothing acrid or sensual about it. It seems that by rising above the habitation of men one leaves all base and earthly sentiments behind, and in proportion as one approaches ethereal spaces the soul contracts something of their inalterable purity. There, one is grave without melancholy, peaceful without indolence, content to be and to think: all excessively vivid desires are blunted; they lose that sharp point that makes them painful, they leave deep in the heart nothing but a light and sweet emotion, and thus it is that a favorable climate causes passions to contribute here to man's felicity which elsewhere make for his torment. I doubt that any violent agitation, any case of vapors[41] could stand up to a comparably prolonged sojourn, and I wonder that baths of the salutary and beneficial air of the mountains have not become one of the principal remedies of medicine and morality.[42]

Qui non palazzi, non teatro o loggia;
Ma'n lor vece un abete, un faggio, un pino
Trà l'erba verde e'l bel monte vicino . . .
Levan di terra al Ciel nostr'intelletto.

Here are no palaces, no theater or gallery,
but in their stead a fir tree, a beech, a pine—
amid the green grass and the nearby mountain . . .—
all these lift our intellects from earth to Heaven.[43]

Combine in your mind the impressions of all I have just described to

you, and you will have some idea of the delightful site where I was. Imagine the variety, the grandeur, the beauty of a thousand stunning vistas; the pleasure of seeing all around one nothing but entirely new objects, strange birds, bizarre and unknown plants, of observing in a way an altogether different nature, and finding oneself in a new world.[44] All that makes up an inexpressible mixture for the eye the charm of which is further enhanced by the subtlety of the air which makes colors more vivid, outlines sharper, brings all lines of sight closer; distances appear shorter than on the plain, where the density of the air covers the earth with a veil, the horizon presents more objects to the eye than it seems able to contain: all in all, the spectacle has something indescribably magical, supernatural about it that ravishes the spirit and the senses; you forget everything, even yourself, and do not even know where you are.

I would have spent the whole time of my journey solely enchanted by the landscape, if I had not discovered a yet sweeter enchantment in the frequentation of the inhabitants. You will find in my description a quick sketch of their manner of living, their simplicity, their equanimity, and that peaceful tranquillity that makes them happy through freedom from pain rather than taste for pleasures. But what I have not been able to depict for you and one can scarce imagine, is their disinterested humanity, and their zeal for hospitality toward all strangers whom chance or curiosity leads to them. I experienced this in a surprising way, I who was known to no one and travelled only with the assistance of a guide. When I would arrive in the evening in a hamlet, everyone would come so eagerly to invite me to his house that it was very hard to choose, and whoever received the preference seemed so pleased by it that the first time I mistook such eagerness for cupidity. But I was quite astonished when after having acted with my host approximately as I would have in an inn, the next day he refused my money, even taking offense at my offer, and it was everywhere the same. So it was the pure love of hospitality, generally rather tepid, that because of its intensity I had taken for avidity of gain. Their disinterest was so complete that in the whole journey I never managed to place a single patagon.*[45] Indeed how can money be spent in a country where masters are not paid for their expenses, nor domestics for their work, and where no beggar is to be found? Yet money is quite rare in the upper Valais, and it is for that reason that the inhabitants are well off: for foodstuffs are plentiful without the slightest trade to the outside, without luxury consumption within, and without seeing the mountain farmer, whose labors are his pleasures, become less industrious. If ever they have more money, they

* Local *écu*.

will infallibly be the poorer. They have the wisdom to sense this, and there are gold veins in the area which it is not permitted to mine.[46]

I was at first very surprised at the contrast between these customs and those of the lower Valais, where, on the road to Italy, passengers are rather roughly held to ransom, and I had some difficulty reconciling such different manners among the same people. A Valaisan explained the reason to me. In the valley, he said, the strangers who pass through are merchants, and other people solely occupied by their trade and gain. It is just that they leave us a part of their profit and we treat them as they treat others. But here where no business attracts strangers, we are sure that their travels are disinterested; and so is the welcome we reserve for them. They are guests who come to see us because they like us, and we greet them with friendship.

Moreover, he added with a smile, such hospitality is not costly, and few think of trying to make a profit from it. Ah, I can believe that! I replied. What would they be doing amongst a people who live to live, not to profit or to show off? Happy men, and worthily so, I like to believe that only a person who resembled you somewhat could enjoy being among you.

The most agreeable part of their welcome, it seemed to me, was to detect in it not the slightest vestige of constraint either for them or for me. They lived in their homes as if I were not there, and I was free to do as if I were there alone. They are unacquainted with the incommodious vanity of doing the honors for strangers, as if to alert them to the presence of a master, on whom if for no other reason one is dependent. If I said nothing, they assumed that I meant to live in their way; I had only to say a word to live in my own, without experiencing on their part the slightest sign of aversion or astonishment. The only compliment they paid me after learning I was Swiss was to say that we were brothers and that I had only to consider myself in their home as if I were in mine. After that they no longer bothered about what I was doing, not even imagining that I could have the least doubt about the sincerity of their offers nor the least scruple in taking advantage of them. Among themselves they behave in the same straightforward way; children of the age of reason are their fathers' equals, domestics eat at the same table with their masters; the same freedom reigns in homes as in the republic, and the family is the image of the State.

The only thing with respect to which I did not enjoy freedom was the excessive length of meals. I was surely free not to sit down to table; but once I was there, I had to stay a good part of the day and drink proportionately. How could a man be imagined and a Swiss to boot who did not like to drink? To be sure, I admit that good wine seems to me an excellent thing, and I am not loath to indulge in it provided I am not forced to it. I have always noticed that hypocrites are sober, and great restraint at table rather often points to feigned morals and duplicity of soul. A straightfor-

ward man is less apprehensive of that affectionate chatter and those tender outpourings that precede drunkenness; but one must know when to stop and avoid excess. That is what I was not at all able to do with such determined drinkers as the Valaisans, wines as potent as these local ones, and tables on which water was never to be seen. How could I bring myself to play the sage so idiotically and offend such fine people? I thus got myself drunk out of gratitude, and not being able to pay for my fare with my purse, I paid for it with my reason.

Another custom that made me hardly less uncomfortable was to see, even at the homes of magistrates, the wife and daughters of the house stand behind my chair, and wait at table like domestics. French gallantry would have been all the more hard pressed to redress this incongruity, that given the faces of the Valaisan women, even women servants would have made their service embarrassing. You can take my word that they are pretty since they looked pretty to me. Eyes used to seeing you are particular when it comes to beauty.

As for me who respect even more the local customs wherever I live than those of gallantry, I accepted their service in silence, with as much gravity as Don Quixote at the Duchess's.[47] At times I noted with a smile the contrast between the long beards and rough appearance of the guests and the dazzling complexion of these shy young beauties, who would blush at a word, and were only the more attractive. But I was a little shocked at the enormous size of their bosoms, which in their dazzling whiteness had only one of the advantages of the model I dared compare it to: a unique and veiled model whose contours furtively observed stand in my mind for those of the famous chalice molded on the world's most beautiful breast.[48]

Be not surprised to find me so initiated to mysteries you conceal so well: for if I am it is despite you; one sense can sometimes instruct another: notwithstanding the most jealous vigilance, in the most cleverly designed attire there still remain some slight interstices, by which sight procures the effects of touch. The avid and intrepid eye slithers with impunity beneath the flowers of a nosegay; it wanders beneath chenille and gauze, and makes the hand feel the supple resistance it would not itself dare experience.[49]

> *Parte appar delle mamme acerbe e crude,*
> *Parte altrui ne ricopre invida vesta;*
> *Invida, ma s'agli occhi il varco chiude,*
> *L'amoroso pensier già non arresta.*[50]
>
> Her sharp, firm breast is partially visible,
> yet is mostly covered by a jealous vestment;
> but if its jealous presence is an obstacle to the eyes,
> it still does not impede loving desire.

I also remarked a great shortcoming in the Valaisan women's dress: it is

that their tops ride so high at the back they make the women look hunchbacked; this creates a peculiar effect along with their little black coifs and the rest of their attire, which moreover wants neither simplicity nor elegance. I am bringing you a complete Valaisan costume, and hope it will suit you well; it was measured on the trimmest figure in these parts.

While I was travelling entranced about these places which are so little known and so worthy of admiration, what were you doing all that time, my Julie? Were you forgotten by your friend? Julie forgotten? Would I not more likely forget myself, and what could I be for a moment alone, I who am nothing if not through you? I have never so well noticed how instinctively I situate our life together in various places according to the state of my soul. It takes refuge with yours when I am sorrowful, and seeks consolation where you are; that is what I was feeling at the time I left you. When I have pleasure, I am incapable of enjoying it alone, and in order to share it with you, I then call you to where I am. That is what happened to me during this hike, where the diversity of objects constantly recalling me within myself, I led you everywhere with me. I took not a step that we took not together. I never admired a vista without hastening to point it out to you. All the trees I encountered lent you their shade, all the grassy spots offered you a place to sit. Sometimes seated at your side, I helped you survey objects about you; sometimes at your knees I admired an object more worthy of the eyes of a sensible man. If I encountered a difficult pass, I watched you scamper up it with the lightness of a fawn bounding after its mother. If a stream had to be crossed, I dared to press such a lovely burden into my arms; I would cross the stream slowly, with delight, and regretfully spied the path I was trying to reach. Everything called me back to you in this peaceful site; the stirring attractions of nature, the unalloyed purity of the air, the simple manners of the inhabitants, their constant and sure propriety, the endearing modesty of the fair sex, its innocent graces, and everything that agreeably struck my sight and my heart, painted a picture of her whom they are seeking.

O my Julie! I would say tenderly, why can I not while away my days with you in these unknown places, happy in our happiness and not in the eyes of men! Why can I not here gather my whole soul into you alone, and in turn become all creation for you! Beauties I adore, here you would enjoy all the homage that is due you. Delights of love, then would our hearts savor you continually! A long and sweet intoxication would leave us oblivious to the passage of years: and when old age finally slakes our first ardors, the habit of thinking and feeling together would put in the place of their transports a no less tender friendship. All the honest sentiments harbored in youth along with those of love would one day fill that immense

vacuum; we would practice, in the midst of this happy people, and following their example, all the duties of humanity: constantly we would unite to do good, and we would not die without having lived.[51]

The mail is arriving, I must end my letter, and rush to get yours. How my heart beats until that time! Alas! I was happy in my fantasies; my happiness flees with them; what shall become of me in reality?

LETTER XXIV

To Julie

I am replying right away to the item in your letter concerning the stipend, and have, thank God, no need to ponder it. My sentiment on this point, my Julie, is as follows.

I distinguish in what is called honor, that which is drawn from public opinion, and that which derives from self-esteem. The former consists in vain prejudices more tossed than a windblown wave; the latter has its basis in the eternal truths of morality. Worldly honor can be advantageous to fortune, but it does not penetrate into the soul and has no influence on true happiness. Genuine honor on the contrary constitutes its very essence, because only in it can that permanent sentiment of inner satisfaction be found which alone can make a thinking being happy. Let us, my Julie, apply these principles to your question; it will quickly be resolved.

Were I to set myself up as a master of philosophy and, like that fool in the fable, take money for teaching wisdom,[52] such employment will seem lowly in the eyes of the world, and I admit there is something inherently ridiculous about it: however since no man can gain his subsistence entirely from himself and there is no way to do anything approaching that except by labor, we will classify such disdain among the most dangerous of prejudices; we will not be so foolish as to sacrifice felicity to this senseless opinion; you will not esteem me the less on that account and I shall not be the more an object of pity, when I shall live off the talents I have cultivated.

But at this point, my Julie, we have other things to consider. Let us leave aside the multitude and look into ourselves. What shall I really become for your father, by accepting from him recompense for the lessons I have given you, and selling a portion of my time, that is to say of my person? A mercenary, a man to whom he pays wages, a sort of footman,[53] and from me he will have as warrant of his confidence, and as security for what is his, my implicit good faith, like that of the meanest of his servants.

Now, what more precious possession can a father have than his only daughter, were she even another than Julie? What will he do then who sells

his services? Will he silence his sentiments for her? ah! you know whether that is possible! or indulging his heart's penchant without scruple, will he offend in his most vulnerable part the man to whom he owes fidelity? Then I no longer consider such a schoolmaster as anything but a double-crosser who tramples under foot the most sacred of rights,* a traitor, a seducer in his own house, whom the laws quite justly condemn to death. I do hope she to whom I speak can understand me; it is not death I fear, but the shame of deserving it, and contempt of myself.

When the letters of Heloise and Abelard fell into your hands, you remember what I told you about reading them and about the Theologian's conduct. I have always pitied Heloise; she had a heart made for love: but Abelard has never seemed to me anything but a wretch deserving of his fate,[54] and as little acquainted with love as with virtue. Having judged him, must I imitate him? Woe to whoever preaches a moral he is unwilling to practice! He who is blinded to that extreme by his passion is soon punished by it, and loses the taste for the sentiments to which he has sacrificed his honor. Love is deprived of its greatest charm when honesty abandons it. To appreciate its full value, the heart must delight in it and raise us up by raising up the loved one. Take away the idea of perfection and you take away enthusiasm; take away esteem and love is reduced to nothing. How could a woman honor a man who dishonors himself? How will he himself be able to adore her who did not shrink from delivering herself to a vile corrupter? Thus they will soon disdain each other; love will be reduced for them to a shameful traffic; they will have lost honor and will not have found felicity.

But such is not the case, my Julie, with two lovers of the same age, in love both with an equal flame, when they are joined by a mutual attachment, unconstrained by any particular bond, both in the prime of their freedom, and no law prohibits their mutual engagement. The sternest of laws can impose no other penalty on them than the very prize of their love; the sole punishment of having been in love is the obligation to love each other forever; and if there be unhappy climes in this world where barbaric man breaks those innocent chains, he is punished for it, no doubt, by the crimes which such constraint occasions.

These are my reasons, wise and virtuous Julie, they are but a cold commentary on those which you set forth with such energy and vivacity in one

* Unhappy youth! who does not see that in allowing himself to be paid with gratitude for what he refuses to accept in money, he violates even more sacred rights. Instead of teaching he corrupts; instead of nourishing he poisons; he garners thanks from a deluded mother for having ruined her child. Yet one can sense that he sincerely loves virtue, but passion leads him astray, and if his excessive youth did not excuse him, with his fine speeches he would be no better than a scoundrel. The two lovers are to be pitied; the mother alone is inexcusable.

of your letters[55]; but they are enough to show you how deeply I have absorbed them. You remember that I did not insist on my refusal, and that despite the reluctance that prejudice had left in me, I accepted your gifts in silence, not indeed finding in genuine honor any solid reason for turning them down. But here duty, reason, even love, all speak with an unmistakable voice. If I must choose between honor and you, my heart is prepared to lose you: it loves you too much, O Julie, to preserve you at that price.

LETTER XXV

From Julie

The relation of your travels is enchanting, my good friend; it would make me love the person who wrote it, even if I did not know him. I must however chide you about one passage you can easily guess, although I couldn't help laughing at the ruse by which you shielded yourself behind Tasso, as if behind a rampart. Really, how could you fail to sense that there is quite a difference between writing for the public and writing to one's mistress?[56] Does not love, so timorous, so scrupulous, demand more deference than does propriety? Could you be unaware that such style is not to my taste, and were you trying to annoy me? But this is perhaps already too much for a topic it was better not to resume. Besides, I am too preoccupied with your second letter to respond in detail to the first. And so, my friend, let us leave the Valais for another time, and limit ourselves to our own concerns for now; we shall have enough to do.

It was clear to me what decision you would take. We know each other too well still to be learning the fundamentals. If virtue ever forsakes us, it will not be, you can take my word for it, in instances that call for courage or sacrifices.* The first reaction when attacked vigorously is to resist; and we will win, I hope, as long as the enemy warns us to take up arms. It is in the midst of sleep, in the lap of sweet rest that we must be wary of surprises: but it is, above all, the persistence of sufferings that makes their weight unbearable, and the soul bears sharp pains more easily than prolonged sadness. That, my friend, is the hard sort of battle we shall henceforth have to wage: it is not heroic actions that duty requires of us, but a still more heroic resistance to unrelenting sufferings.

I had only too well foreseen it: the time for happiness has passed like a lightning flash; the time for trials is beginning, with nothing to help me tell when it will end. Everything alarms and discourages me; a mortal lan-

* We shall soon see that the prediction could not square more poorly with what happens.

guor is taking possession of my soul; without any particular reason for tears, involuntary tears stream from my eyes; I do not read inevitable woes into the future; but I was cultivating hope and see it withering every day. What use is it, alas, to water the leaves when the tree is felled at the base?

I sense, my friend, that the weight of absence is crushing me. I cannot live without you, I can sense that; this is what frightens me the most. A hundred times a day I roam the places where we dwelt together and never find you there. I wait for you at your regular hour; the time goes by and you do not come. Every thing I perceive brings me some idea of your presence to warn me that I have lost you. You have not this awful torture. Your heart alone can tell you that you miss me. Ah, if you knew how much worse a torment it is to stay behind when lovers separate, how much you would prefer your state to mine!

Even then if I dared to murmur! if I dared to talk about my sufferings, I should feel relief for the woes of which I could complain. But except for a few sighs breathed out secretly into my cousin's bosom, I must stifle all the others; I must repress my tears; I must smile when I feel like dying.

Sentirsi, oh Dei, morir;
E non poter mai dir:
Morir mi sento![57]

Ye gods! to feel oneself dying
and not dare say:
I can feel myself dying.

The worst is that all these woes constantly exacerbate my greatest one, and the more your remembrance dismays me, the more I like recalling it. Tell me, my friend, my sweet friend! can you feel how tender is a languishing heart, and to what extent sadness is the ferment of love?

I intended to talk to you about a thousand things; but besides the fact that I had better wait until I know positively where you are, I cannot possibly continue this letter in the state I am in as I write. Farewell, my Friend; I quit my pen, but be assured that I do not quit you.

Note

I write this note to the usual address via a boatman whom I do not know, to give notice that I have chosen my asylum at Meillerie on the opposite shore,[58] so as at least to enjoy seeing the place I dare not approach.

LETTER XXVI
To Julie

How changed is my state in just a few days! What bitterness is mixed with the sweetness of coming closer to you! What sad reflections besiege me! What obstacles my fears make me foresee! O Julie, what a fatal present from heaven is a sensible soul! He who has received it must expect to know nothing but pain and suffering in this world. Lowly plaything of the air and seasons, his destiny will be regulated by sun or fog, fair or overcast weather, and he will be satisfied or sad at the whim of the winds. Victim of prejudice, he will find in absurd maxims an invincible obstacle to the just wishes of his heart. Men will punish him for having upright sentiments on every subject, and for judging by what is genuine rather than by what is conventional. Alone he would suffice to his own misery, by giving himself over indiscreetly to the divine attractions of honesty and beauty, whereas the weighty chains of necessity attach him to ignominy. He will seek supreme felicity without remembering that he is a man: his heart and his reason will be endlessly at war, and unbounded desires will set in store for him eternal deprivation.

Such is the cruel situation into which I am plunged by the fate that crushes me,[59] and sentiments that raise me up, and your father who disdains me, and you who are the charm and torment of my life. Had it not been for you, fatal Beauty! I would never have felt this unbearable contrast of grandeur in my innermost soul and meniality in my fortune; I would have lived peaceably and died content, without deigning to notice what rank I had occupied on earth. But to have seen you and not be able to possess you, to worship you and be a mere man! to be loved and unable to be happy! to dwell in the same places and not be able to live in company! O Julie whom I cannot give up! O destiny that I cannot defeat! What awful struggles you provoke in me, without my ever being able to surmount my desires or my impotence!

What an odd and inconceivable effect! Ever since I have come closer to you, nothing but baleful thoughts turn over in my head. Perhaps my present abode contributes to this melancholy; it is dreary and dreadful; it suits all the better the state of my soul, and I would not so patiently live in a pleasanter one. A series of barren cliffs lines the coast, and surrounds my lodging, made still more dismal by winter. Ah! I can sense it, my Julie, if I had to give you up, there would be for me no other abode nor other season.

With the violent transports that stir me I am incapable of remaining still; I run, I climb avidly, I head toward the cliffs; I roam all about the region with great strides, and find in every object the same horror that reigns within me. No greenery is left to be seen, the grass is yellow and withered, the trees are bare, the séchard* and cold bise[60] pile up snow and ice, and all of nature is dead to my eyes, like hope in my heart.

Among the cliffs on this coast, I have found in a sheltered and solitary place a small esplanade whence one can distinctly see the happy town where you live. Imagine how avidly my eyes were directed toward that cherished site. The first day, I tried a thousand times to make out your residence; but the extreme distance made my efforts futile, and I realized that my imagination was deluding my weary eyes. I ran to the parish Priest to borrow a telescope with which I saw or thought I saw your house, and since that time I have spent whole days in that asylum watching the lucky walls that enclose the source of my life. In spite of the season I go there early in the morning and return only at night. Leaves and some dry sticks which I burn serve along with exercise to keep me from excessive exposure to the cold. I have taken such a fancy to this wild spot that I even carry ink and paper there with me, and am now writing this letter on a boulder which the ice has detached from the neighboring cliff.

Here it is, my Julie, that your unhappy lover is enjoying to the full perhaps the last pleasures he will taste in this world. It is from here that, through air and walls, he dares in secret to penetrate right into your room. Your charming features strike him again; your tender gaze revives his dying heart; he hears the sound of your sweet voice; he dares seek again in your arms the delirium he experienced in the bower. Vain phantom of a troubled soul that loses itself in its own desires! Soon forced to become myself again, I observe you at least in your innocent daily activities; I follow from afar the sundry occupations of your day, and picture them to myself in the times and places where I was sometimes their happy witness. I ever see you attending to cares that make you more estimable, and my heart melts with delight at the inexhaustible goodness of yours. Right now, I say to myself in the morning, she is emerging from a peaceful sleep, her complexion has the freshness of the rose, her soul basks in a sweet peace; she offers up to him from whom she received her existence a day that shall not be lost to virtue. Now she goes to visit her mother; the tender affections of her heart are poured out to those who gave her life, she relieves them in the minutiae of domestic cares, she perhaps intervenes for

* Northeast wind.

an imprudent servant, she perhaps exhorts him in secret, she perhaps asks for a favor for another. At some other time; she attends without displeasure to the labors of her sex, she embellishes her soul with useful knowledge, she adds to her exquisite taste the pleasures of the fine arts, and those of dance to her natural litheness. Sometimes I see elegant and simple finery, adorning charms that do not require it; here I see her consult a venerable pastor over the silent suffering of an indigent family, there, succor or console the sad widow and the abandoned orphan. At times she charms an honest circle of friends with her sound and modest words; at others, laughing along with friends of her sex she steers their bantering youth back toward a proper moral tone. For a few instants, ah forgive me! I dare see you occupy yourself with me; I see your tearful eyes scanning one of my Letters; I read by their sweet languor that the lines you trace are being addressed to your fortunate lover, I see that it is of him you are speaking to your cousin with such tender emotion. O Julie! O Julie! And should we not be united? and should we not while away our days together? and could we be separated forever? No, let that horrid thought never present itself to my mind! In an instant it changes all my tearfulness into a fury; rage drives me from cave to cave; groans and cries burst from me despite myself; I roar like an angry lioness[61]; I am capable of anything, except giving you up, and there is nothing, no nothing I would not do to possess you or die.

This is where I was in my letter, and I was awaiting only for a sure opportunity to send it to you, when I received from Sion the last one you had written me there. How the sadness that permeates it has conjured my own! What a striking example I saw there of what you said to me about the harmony of our souls in widely separated places![62] Your affliction I admit is more patient, mine is more impetuous; but the same sentiment has to take on the coloration of the characters who experience it, and it is quite natural for the greatest losses to cause the greatest sufferings. Did I say losses? Oh! who could bear them? No, recognize it finally, my Julie, an eternal edict from heaven destined us for each other; that is the first law we must heed; the primary concern in life is to unite oneself with that person who can make it blissful for us. I see to my lament that you are losing yourself in your hopeless schemes; you want to break down insurmountable barriers and are neglecting the only possible means; your enthusiasm for honesty deprives you of reason, and your virtue has turned to delirium.

Ah! if you could remain forever as young and brilliant as now, I would ask Heaven only to assure me you were everlastingly happy, to see you each year of my life just once, just one time; and spend the rest of my days

watching your abode from afar, worshipping you among these cliffs. But alas! behold the speed of that sphere that is never at rest; it flies and time flees, the opportunity slips away, your beauty, even your beauty will have its end, it must decline and perish one day like a flower that falls without being picked[63]; and I all the while, I lament, I suffer, my youth is being consumed in tears, and withers in sorrow. Remember, remember, Julie, that already we can count whole years lost for pleasure. Remember that they will never return; that the same is true of those we have left if we let them too get away. O blinded lover! you seek an illusory happiness for a time when we shall be no more; you look to a distant future, and you do not perceive that we are continually wasting away, and that our souls, exhausted by love and pain, are melting away and running off like water. Awake, there is still time, awake, my Julie, from this fatal error. Put aside your schemes and be happy. Come, O my soul, into your friend's arms and reunite the two halves of our being: come and in the face of heaven, guide in our flight and witness to our vows, swear we will live and die for each other. It is not you, I know, whom I need reassure against the fear of indigence. Let us be happy and poor, ah what riches we will then possess! But let us not affront humanity by believing that there will remain no asylum in the whole earth for two unfortunate Lovers. I have good arms, I am strong; the bread earned by my labor will seem more delicious to you than the fare of feasts. Can a meal prepared by love ever lack savor? Ah, tender and dear lover, were we never to be happy but a single day, do you mean to depart this short life without having tasted happiness?

I have only one more word for you, O Julie! you know the ancient use of the cliff of Leucadia, the last refuge of so many unhappy lovers.[64] This place resembles it in many ways. The mountainside is steep, the water deep, and I am in despair.

LETTER XXVII

From Claire

My grief leaves me scarcely the strength to write to you. Your woes and mine are consummate: the sweet Julie is at death's door and has perhaps not two days to live. The strain of sending you away already impaired her health. The first conversation she had on your account with her father was a further blow: other, more recent worries have added to her agitations,[65] and your latest letter did the rest. It moved her so violently that after spending a night in frightful struggles, yesterday she fell into a burning

fever that only increased until finally it gave her transports.[66] In this condition she calls your name at every moment, and speaks of you with a vehemence that reveals how possessed of you she is. Her father is kept as far away as possible; this proves sufficiently that my aunt has conceived some suspicions: she even asked me uneasily if you had not returned, and I see that, her daughter's danger outweighing for the moment every other consideration, she would not be displeased to see you here.

Come then, without delay. I have hired this boat expressly to bring you this letter; it is at your disposal, use it for your return, and above all don't waste a moment if you hope to see again the tenderest lover that ever there was.

LETTER XXVIII

From Julie to Claire

How your absence embitters the life you restored to me! What a convalescence! A passion more terrible than fever and transport drags me to my ruin. Cruel Claire! you leave me just when I need you more; you left me for a week, perhaps you will never see me again. Oh if you knew what the madman dares to propose to me!..... and in what language!..... to flee! To follow him! To elope with me!..... poor fool!..... Of whom do I complain? My heart, my shameless heart urges me a hundred times more than he..... great God! What would it be, if he knew everything?.... It would make him mad, I would be persuaded, I would have to go..... I shudder.....

So, my father then has sold me? He is making merchandise, a slave of his daughter; he acquits his debts at my expense! He pays for his life with mine!.... For I can surely tell that I shall never survive it.... Heartless, denatured father! Does he deserve..... what, deserve? he is the best of fathers; he means to unite his daughter with his friend, such is his crime. But my mother, my tender mother! What wrong has she done me?.... Ah, a great deal! she has loved me too much, she has ruined me. Claire, what shall I do? what will become of me? Hanz still has not come. I don't know how to send you this letter. Before you receive it.... before your return..... who knows.... fugitive, wandering, dishonored.... It is too late, it is too late, this is the moment of crisis. A day, an hour, a moment, perhaps.... who can avoid his fate?..... Oh in whatever place I may live and die; into whatever obscure asylum I may trail my shame and despair, Claire, remember your friend..... Alas; want and infamy change people's hearts..... Ah, if ever mine forgets you, it will be much changed indeed!

LETTER XXIX

From Julie to Claire

Stay, oh stay where you are! don't return ever; you would come too late. I ought never to see you again; how could I bear to look at you?

Where were you, my sweet friend, my protector, my guardian Angel? you have forsaken me, and I am undone! What, was that fatal trip so necessary or so urgent? Could you leave me to myself at the most dangerous moment of my life? What remorse you have laid up for yourself by your criminal neglect! It will be eternal as will my tears. Your loss is no less irreparable than mine, and another friend worthy of you is not more easy to recover than my innocence.

Wretched me, what have I said? I can neither speak nor be silent. What good is silence when remorse cries out? Does the whole universe not reproach me my fault? Is my shame not written on every object? If I cannot pour out my heart to yours, then I must suffocate. And you, have you nothing to reproach yourself, complacent and too trusting friend? Ah why did you not betray me instead? It is your loyalty, your blind friendship, your unfortunate indulgence that has wrought my ruin.

What Demon inspired you to recall him, the cruel man who brings me to infamy? Did his perfidious attentions have to restore me to life, only to make it odious to me? Let him flee forever, the brute! may he be touched by what little pity remains in him; let him come no more to multiply my torments with his presence; let him give up the fierce pleasure of witnessing my tears. What am I saying, alas? it is not he who is guilty; it is I alone; all my misfortunes are my own doing, and I have no reproach for anyone but myself. But vice has already corrupted my soul; the very first of its effects is to make us blame others for our crimes.

No, no, never was he capable of violating his vows. Unknown to his virtuous heart is the abject art of doing violence to the woman he loves. Ah! doubtless, he knows how to love better than I, since he knows better how to master himself. A hundred times my eyes were witness to his struggles and his victory; in his own would flash the flame of his desires, he would throw himself headlong at me in a blind transport; suddenly he would stop; an insurmountable barrier seemed to have surrounded me, and never would his impetuous but honest love have crossed it. I dared observe too long this dangerous spectacle. I felt myself troubled by his transports, his sighs oppressed my heart; I shared his torments, thinking I was merely being compassionate. I saw him in convulsive agitation, about

to faint at my feet. Love alone might have spared me; O my Cousin, it was pity that undid me.

It was as if in order to seduce me my fatal passion had covered itself with the mask of every virtue. That very day he had pressed me more ardently to run away with him. It would have meant distressing a most excellent father; plunging a dagger into a mother's breast; I resisted, I rejected this proposal in horror. The impossibility we should ever see our vows fulfilled, the necessity of concealing that impossibility from him, the qualm at deceiving such a submissive and tender lover after flattering his hopes, all these sapped my courage, added to my weakness, estranged my reason. I had to deliver the death blow to those who gave me life, to my lover, or to myself. Without knowing what I was doing I chose my own demise. I forgot everything and remembered only love. So it is that a moment's distraction has undone me forever. I have fallen into the abyss of infamy from which a maiden can never return; and if I live, it is only to be more unhappy.

Lamenting I seek some shred of consolation in this world. I see none but you, my sweet friend; do not deny me such a lovely resource, I entreat you; do not deprive me of the sweetness of your friendship. I have lost the right to claim it, but never did I need it so direly. Let pity serve in place of esteem. Come, my dear, and open your soul to my murmurs; come share your friend's tears; shield me, if it is possible, from my own contempt, and make me believe that I have not lost everything, since your heart is still mine.

LETTER XXX

Reply

Unhappy maid! Alas, what have you done? Oh God! you were so worthy of being pure! What can I tell you in the horror of your situation, and in the despondency into which it casts you? Shall I utterly crush your poor heart, or shall I offer you consolations that are unavailing to my own? Shall I depict to you things as they are, or as it befits you to see them? Sacred and pure friendship! Put thy sweet illusions in my mind, and may I, in the tender pity thou dost inspire in me, be the first deluded over woes thou canst no longer heal.

I have feared, as you well know, the misfortune you lament. How many times did I predict it to you without being heard!.... It is the result of a reckless confidence..... Ah! it is too late for all that. I would have betrayed your secret, no doubt, if I could thereby have saved you: but I read better

than you into your too sensible heart; I saw it consumed by a devouring flame that nothing could put out. I sensed that for that heart throbbing with love it would be happiness or death, and when the fear of succumbing led you to banish your lover with so many tears, I concluded that soon you would be no more, or that he would soon be recalled. But what was my horror when I saw you losing your lust for life, and so near to death! Blame on neither your lover nor on yourself a fault for which I am the most guilty, since I foresaw it without forestalling it.

It is true that I left against my will; as you saw, I was compelled to obey; had I thought you so near your ruin, I could have been ripped to pieces sooner than torn from you. I mistook the moment of peril. Weak and still languishing, you seemed to me secure against such a brief absence: I did not foresee the dangerous dilemma you would find yourself in; I forgot that your own weakness left your downcast heart less able to fend against itself. I beg my own heart's forgiveness, it is hard for me to repent of an error that has saved your life; I have not that rugged courage which enabled you to give me up; I could not have lost you without fatal despair, and I would still rather have you alive, and in tears.

But why so many tears, dear and sweet friend? Why these regrets that exceed your fault, and this self-contempt you have not deserved? Will one moment of weakness obliterate so many sacrifices, and is the very danger you have just come through not a proof of your virtue? You think only of your defeat, and forget all the painful victories that went before. If you have struggled more than women who resist, have you not done more for honor than they? If nothing can justify you, at least bear in mind what excuses you. I have a pretty good idea of what people call love; I shall always be able to resist the transports it inspires; yet I would have put up less resistance to a love such as yours, and though never vanquished, I am less chaste than you.

This language will shock you; but your greatest misfortune is to have made it necessary; I would give my life for it not to fit your case; for I hate bad maxims even more than bad deeds.* Were the fault not yet committed, and were I base enough to speak to you in this way, and you to listen, we two would be the lowest of creatures. But now, my dear, I must speak to you in this way, and you must listen, or you are undone: for there are still in you a thousand lovely qualities which your self-esteem alone can preserve, and which too much shame, with the abjection it would cause, would unfailingly destroy, and it is by what you believe you are still worth that you will indeed maintain worthiness.

* This sentiment is just and sound. Unbridled passions inspire bad deeds; but bad maxims corrupt reason itself, and leave no resources by which one might return to the good.

Take care then lest you fall into a dangerous dejection that would debase you more than your weakness. Is genuine love meant to degrade the soul? Let not a single fault that love has committed deprive you of that noble enthusiasm for honesty and beauty, which always raised you above yourself. Is a spot visible on the sun? How many virtues do you still possess for one that has become tainted? Will that make you any less sweet, less sincere, less modest, less generous? Will you be any less worthy, in a word, of all our praise? Honor, humanity, friendship, pure love, will these be any less dear to your heart? Will you have any less love for those virtues you no longer possess? No, dear and good Julie, while pitying you your Claire worships you; she knows, she feels that there is nothing good that your soul cannot still bring forth. Ah! believe me, you could lose a great deal before any woman purer than you could ever be your equal.

And after all I still have you; I can find consolation for anything, except losing you. Your first letter made me shudder. It would almost have made me hope for the second, if I had not received it at the same time. To intend to abandon your friend! To plan to run away without me! You do not mention your worst fault. That is the one that should make you a hundred times more ashamed. But the ingrate has only her love in mind.... Well, I would have gone to the ends of the earth to kill you.

With mortal impatience I count the minutes I am forced to spend far from you. They are being cruelly prolonged; we will be in Lausanne six days more, after which I shall fly to my sole friend. I shall go console her or grieve with her, dry or share her tears. To your suffering I shall be less the voice of inflexible reason than of tender friendship. Dear cousin, we must lament, love one another, and keep our peace, and, if it can be done, expunge by dint of virtues a fault that cannot be repaired with tears! Ah! my poor Chaillot!

LETTER XXXI

To Julie

What a wonder from Heaven are you, inconceivable Julie? And by what art known to you alone can you combine so many incompatible movements in a single heart? Drunk with love and ecstasy, my own heart is plunged into sadness; I suffer and languish with pain in the midst of supreme felicity, and reproach myself as a crime this surfeit of happiness. God! what terrible torment, not to dare give in wholly to any single sentiment, to play them constantly against each other, and always mix bitterness with pleasure! It were a hundred times better simply to be miserable.

What use is it to me, alas, to be happy? It is no longer my woes, but yours I feel, and they move me all the more. In vain do you attempt to hide your sufferings; in spite of you I can read them in your languorous and downcast eyes. Can those touching eyes conceal any secret from love? I perceive, I perceive beneath your seeming composure the hidden discontent that besieges you, and your sadness veiled by a sweet smile is but the more bitter to my heart.

It is too late to hide anything from me. Yesterday I was in your mother's room; she left me for a moment; I heard laments that pierced my soul, could I hearing this fail to recognize their source? I approached the place from which they seemed to proceed; I entered your room, I came all the way to your dressing room. What went through my mind when I cracked your door, and beheld her, she who should sit on the throne of the universe, seated on the floor with her head leaning on an armchair soaked with her tears? Ah, I would have suffered less had it been my blood! With what remorse was I instantly torn! My happiness became my torture; I thenceforth felt only your pains, and would have redeemed with my life your tears and all my pleasures. I wanted to throw myself at your feet, I wanted to wipe those precious tears with my lips, gather them into the recesses of my heart, die or dry them up forever; I heard your mother returning; I was obliged to repair hastily to my place, bearing with me all your sufferings, and regrets that will end only when they too are ended.

How humiliated, how degraded am I by your repentance! How despicable must I then be, if our union makes you despise yourself, and if the charm of my days is a torture to yours? Be more just to yourself, my Julie; look with less prejudice on the sacred bonds your heart has contracted. Have you not followed nature's purest laws? Have you not entered freely into the holiest of engagements? What have you done that divine and human laws cannot and should not sanction? What is lacking in our union but a public declaration? Be mine, and you bear no more guilt. O my spouse! O my worthy and chaste companion! O glory and happiness of my life! No, it is not what your love has done that would be a crime, but what you would now revoke: only by taking another spouse can you offend honor. Be ever faithful to your heart's beloved and you will be innocent. The chain that binds us is legitimate, only the infidelity that might break it would be blameful, and it is henceforth for love to safeguard virtue.

But even were your sorrow reasonable, and your remorse justified, why deprive me of my share in them? Why do my eyes not shed half of your tears? You have no pain that I ought not to feel, no sentiment that I ought not to share, and my rightly jealous heart reproaches you for all the tears

you do not pour into my bosom. Tell me, my cold and mysterious lover, is everything that your heart withholds from mine not a larceny you commit against love? Must everything not be common to us both, do you not remember having said so? Ah! if you could love as I do, my happiness would comfort you as your pain afflicts me, and you would share my pleasures as I share your sadness!

But I can see you scorn me like a madman, because my reason goes awry in the midst of delights. My throes frighten you, my delirium dismays you, and you do not sense that all of human strength is not enough for boundless felicities. How do you expect a sensible soul to taste infinite joys in moderation? How do you expect it to bear so many kinds of transport at one time without losing control? Do you not know that there is a limit where no reason can hold out, that there is no man in the world whose common sense can stand up to every test? Take pity then on the distraction into which you have thrown me, and do not scorn errors that are of your own making. I am, I confess, no longer my own, my alienated soul is entirely in you. I am thus better suited to feel your sorrows and worthier to share them. O Julie, conceal nothing from your own self![67]

LETTER XXXII

Reply

There was a time, my gentle friend, when our Letters were easy and charming; the sentiment that dictated them flowed with an elegant simplicity; it required neither art nor coloration, and its purity was its only ornament. That happy time is no more: alas! it cannot return; and the very first effect of such a cruel change is that our hearts have already ceased to understand each other.

Your eyes have beheld my suffering. You think you have discovered its source; you try to comfort me with ineffectual talk, and when you think you are deluding me, it is you, my friend, who are deluded. Believe me, believe your Julie's tender heart; I regret far less having given too much to love than having deprived it of its greatest charm. That blissful enchantment of virtue has vanished away like a dream: our flame has lost that divine ardor which fed it while purifying it; we pursued pleasure, and happiness has fled far from us. Recall to mind those delightful moments when our hearts were all the more united that we respected each other more, when passion drew from its own profusion the strength to control itself, when innocence consoled us for constraint, when the tributes paid to honor all redounded to love's advantage. Compare such a charming state

with our present situation: what turmoil! what terror! what mortal alarms! how many immoderate sentiments have lost their original sweetness! What has become of that zeal for propriety and honesty the love of which inspired our lives' every action, and in turn made love more delightful? Our ecstasy used to be tranquil and lasting; now we merely have transports: this insane happiness is more like fits of madness than tender caresses. A pure and sacred flame burned our hearts; now, a prey to the errors of the senses, we are nothing more than vulgar lovers; fortunate at that if jealous love still deigns to preside over pleasures that the basest mortal can enjoy without it.

Such, my friend, are the losses we share, and that I mourn no less for your sake than for mine. I add nothing about my own, your heart is of the sort that can feel them. Consider my shame, and mourn if you know love. My fault is irreparable, my tears will not run dry. O you who cause them to flow, think before you interfere with sufferings so well deserved; my fondest hope is to make them eternal; it would be my greatest affliction to be consoled for them; and the final degree of ignominy is to lose along with innocence the sentiment that makes us love it.

I know my fate, I know its horror, and yet there remains to me one consolation in my despair, there is only one, but it is sweet. It is from you that I await it, my gentle friend. Now that I no longer dare look myself in the eye, I look with all the more pleasure on my beloved. I return to you all the esteem you have cost me, and you become all the more dear to me by forcing me to hate myself. Love, that fatal love that is my undoing gives you a new value; you rise higher when I sink lower; your soul seems to have profited from all the abjection of mine. Be then henceforth my sole hope, it is for you to justify my fault if that is possible; cover it with the honesty of your sentiments; let your merit undo my shame; render excusable by your virtues those you have cost me.[68] Be my whole being, now that I am naught. What honor I have left lies entirely in you, and so long as you are worthy of respect, I shall not be altogether contemptible.

Whatever my regret at recovering my health, I can no longer disguise it. My face would belie my words, and my sham convalescence can no longer deceive anyone. Hasten then, before I am forced to resume my ordinary occupations, to take the step we have agreed upon. It is clear to me that my mother has become suspicious and is watching us. Not so my father, I admit: this proud gentleman does not even imagine that a commoner could be in love with his daughter; and yet, you know his resolutions; he will make the first move if you do not, and by trying to maintain the same access in our house, you will banish yourself altogether. Do as I say, speak to my mother while there is still time. Allege some business that prevents

you from continuing to tutor me, and let us relinquish seeing each other so often, so we can see each other at least occasionally: for if our door is closed to you, you can no longer come here; but if you close it yourself, your visits will be more or less at your discretion, and by being a bit resourceful and accommodating, you can subsequently make them more frequent, without their being noticed or frowned upon. I shall tell you this evening the means I am devising for us to meet at other times, and you will concede that the inseparable Cousin, who used to provoke such grumbling, will not now be without some utility to two lovers whose side she ought never to have left.

LETTER XXXIII

From Julie

Ah, my friend, what a poor refuge company makes for two lovers! What a torment to see each other under such constraint! It were a hundred times better not to see each other at all. How can one appear composed with such emotion? How be so different from oneself? How keep one's mind on so many things when one is occupied with a single one? How restrain gesture and eyes when the heart flies? Never in my life did I feel as unnerved as I did yesterday when you were announced at Madame d'Hervart's. I took the sound of your name for a reproach addressed to me; I imagined that everyone was watching me in concert; I no longer knew what I was doing, and when you entered I blushed so prodigiously that my Cousin, who was keeping an eye on me, was obliged to extend her face and fan forward, as if to whisper in my ear. I trembled lest even that should make the wrong impression, and that some secrecy be read into such whispering. In a word, in everything I found new cause for alarms, and I never felt more keenly how many wholly unsuspecting witnesses a guilty conscience arms against us.

Claire claimed to notice that you cut no better a figure; you seemed to her embarrassed in your demeanor, uneasy about what you should do, daring neither to come nor go, neither to accost me nor take your distance, and casting glances all about you in order, she said, to find the opportunity to turn them toward us. Once I was fairly well over my agitation, I thought I too could perceive yours, up to the time when, the young Madame Belon having spoken to you, you sat down in conversation with her, and became calmer at her side.

I feel, my friend, that this manner of living, so full of constraint and so short on pleasure, is not good for us: we are too much in love to put up

with such discomfort. Such meetings in public suit only those who, without being in love, always enjoy being together, or who can do without secrecy: the anxieties are too intense on my part, the indiscretions too dangerous on yours, and I cannot always keep a Madame Belon at my side, to create a diversion as needed.

Let us, do let us return to that solitary and peaceful life, from which I so inappropriately plucked you. It was there that our flame was born and fostered; it would perhaps fade under a more dissipated style of life. All great passions are born in solitude; their equal is not found in society, where nothing has time to make a deep impression, and the variety of tastes numbs the strength of sentiments. Such a state is also better suited to my melancholy, which feeds on the same elements as my love: your cherished image sustains each of them, and I prefer to see you tender and sensible in the recesses of my heart, than constrained and distracted in company.

There may, moreover, come a time when I could be forced to a more rigorous retreat; would it were already here, that desired moment! Prudence and my inclination equally dictate that I take up in advance habits suitable to those necessity may require. Ah! if only my faults could give birth to the means of atoning for them! The sweet hope of being some day..... but inadvertently I might say more than I mean to about the plan I have in mind. Forgive me this enigma, my unique Friend, my heart will never hold a secret it would not be sweet for you to learn. You must nonetheless remain in the dark about this one, and all I can tell you at present, is that the love that caused our sufferings must also provide us the remedy. Turn it over, make your commentaries in your head if you wish; but I forbid you to ask me any questions about this.

LETTER XXXIV

Reply

No, non vedrete mai
Cambiar gl'affetti miei,
Bei lumi onde imparai
A sospirar d'amor.[69]

No, no, fair eyes
that taught me to sigh for love,
never will you see
my affections change.

How I ought to love that pretty Madame Belon, for the pleasure she procured me! Forgive me, divine Julie, I dared for a moment to delight in

your tender alarms, and that moment was one of the sweetest of my life. How charming were those uneasy and curious glances cast furtively our way, glances that were instantly lowered to avoid mine! What was your happy lover doing then? Talking with Madame Belon? Ah, my Julie, can you believe that? No, no, incomparable maiden; he was more worthily occupied. With what charm did his heart follow all the movements of yours! With what greedy impatience did his eyes devour your charms! Your love, your beauty filled, ravished his soul; it was barely able to contain so many delightful sentiments. My only regret was to enjoy at the expense of the woman I love pleasures she did not share. Do I know what Madame Belon said to me during this time? Do I know what I answered her? Did I know at the time of our conversation? Can she have known herself, and could she understand anything at all in the remarks of a man who talked without thinking and answered without hearing?

Com' huom, che par ch'ascolti, e nulla intende.[70]

As he who seems to listen and hears nothing.

No wonder she conceived the most perfect disdain for me. She has told everyone, and perhaps yourself, that I lack common sense, worse, that I haven't a whit of wit, and that I am just as dumb as my books. What does it matter to me what she says or thinks? Is not my Julie the sole arbiter of my being and of the rank I hope to acquire? Let the rest of the world think of me as it may, my entire reward lies in her esteem.

Ah, do not believe that either Madame Belon or all the beauties superior to hers have the power to create the diversion you mention, and divert for an instant my heart and eyes from you! If you could doubt my sincerity, if you could so mortally insult my love and your own charms, tell me, who could have recorded all that took place about you? Did I not see you shine among those young beauties like the sun amidst the stars it eclipses? Did I not perceive the Cavaliers* gathering about your chair? Could I not see in the spite of your lady companions the admiration the men evinced for you? Did I not see their earnest attentions, their compliments, and their gallantries? Did I not see you receive all that with the modest and indifferent mien that is more awesome than pride? Did I not see when you removed your gloves for the collation the effect that bared arm had on observers? Did I not see the young stranger who picked up your glove attempt to kiss the charming hand that received it? Did I not see a brasher one, whose fiery eye drained my blood and my life, oblige you, once you

* *Cavaliers*; an old word no longer used. One says, *men*. I thought I owed to provincials this important observation, so as to be useful to the public at least once.

became aware of it, to add a pin to your kerchief? I was not so distracted as you think; I saw all that, Julie, and it did not make me jealous; for I know your heart. It is not, I well know, one that can love twice. Would you accuse mine of such?

Let us then return to that solitary life I relinquished only regretfully. No, the heart cannot take nourishment in the tumult of the world. False pleasures make the deprivation of true ones seem more bitter, and it prefers suffering to vain consolations. But, my Julie, there are some, there can be, more substantial ones for the constraint under which we live, and you seem to be forgetting them! What, spend an entire fortnight so near without seeing or saying anything to each other! Ah, what do you want a heart burnt up with love to do for so many centuries? Absence itself would be less cruel. What good is an excessive prudence that does us more harm than it prevents? What good is it to prolong our life along with our torture? Were it not an hundred times better to meet for one instant and then die?

I do not disguise, my sweet Friend, that I would like to discover the nice little secret you are concealing from me, never was there one more intriguing for us; but my efforts to that effect are futile.[71] I shall however be able to keep the silence you impose, and contain an indiscreet curiosity; but in respecting such a sweet enigma, could I not at least assure its clarification? Who knows, who indeed knows whether your plans are not founded on fantasies? Dear soul of my life, ah! let us at least begin to make them come true.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that Monsieur Roguin has offered me a company in the Regiment he is raising for the king of Sardinia.[72] I was greatly moved by this valiant officer's esteem; in thanking him I told him I was too nearsighted for the service and that my passion for learning accorded ill with such an active life. In that, I made no sacrifice to love. I believe that everyone owes his life and blood to his fatherland, that one cannot estrange oneself to foreign Princes to whom one owes nothing, and still less sell oneself and make of the world's noblest profession that of a vile mercenary. These maxims were my father's whom I should be very happy to imitate in his love for his duties and his country. He never would enter the service of any foreign Prince. But in the war of 1712 he bore arms with honor for the fatherland; he found himself in several combats in one of which he was wounded; and at the battle of Wilmerghen, he had the good fortune to abscond with an enemy Flag under the eyes of General Sacconex.[73]

LETTER XXXV
From Julie

It does not seem to me, my Friend, that the two words I had said in jest about Madame Belon called for such a serious explanation. So much concern for justification sometimes produces a reverse prejudice, and it is only the attention paid to bagatelles that gives them some importance. That surely will never happen between us; for hearts well engaged are hardly fussy, and Lovers' fusses over trifles almost always have a foundation more real than it appears.

Nonetheless I am not unhappy that this bagatelle furnishes us the opportunity to discuss jealousy between us; a subject unfortunately all too important for me.

I see, my friend, from the temper of our souls and our affinity of tastes, that love will be the major business of our lives. Once it has made the profound impressions we have received, it must either extinguish or absorb every other passion; for us the slightest cooling would soon become the languor of death; an invincible distaste, a perpetual tedium, would follow the extinction of love, and we would scarcely survive long once we had ceased to love. In my own case, you can certainly tell that only the delirium of passion can veil the horror of my present situation, and that I must love with transport, or die of anguish. Consider then whether I am in a position to discuss seriously a point on which must depend the happiness or unhappiness of my days!

Insofar as I can judge my own case, it seems to me that often given to too much impulsiveness, I am however little prone to anger. My pains would have to seethe a long time within me before I would dare reveal their source to the person who caused them, and as I am persuaded that one cannot commit an offense without intending to, I would sooner sustain a hundred articles of complaint than a single explanation. Such a character is bound to take one very far if one has any inclination to jealousy, and I do fear I feel in myself this dangerous inclination. Not that I am unaware that your heart is made for mine and not for another. But one can deceive oneself, mistake a passing taste for passion, and do as many things out of fantasy as one would perhaps have done out of love. Now if you can find yourself inconstant without being so, all the more may I wrongly accuse you of infidelity. This horrible doubt would however poison my life; I would murmur without complaining and die inconsolate without ever ceasing to be loved.

Let us anticipate, I entreat you, a misfortune the very thought of which

makes me shudder. Then swear to me, my sweet friend, not by love, an oath one uses only when it is superfluous; but by the sacred name of honor, which you so respect, that I will never cease to be your heart's confidante, and that no change will ever take place in it but that I am the first informed. Do not simply allege that you will never have anything to tell me; that I believe, and hope it is true; but anticipate my foolish alarms, and give me with your commitments to a future that is surely not to be, the eternal security of the present. I would be less pitiable to learn my real misfortunes from you than endlessly to suffer imaginary ones; I would at least relish your remorse; if you no longer shared my flame, you would still share my pains, and the tears I pour into your bosom would seem to me less bitter.

It is on this score, my friend, that I doubly congratulate myself on my choice, for the sweet bond that unites us and for the probity that secures it; such is the proper use of this rule of prudence in things of pure sentiment; such is the way strict virtue is able to stave off the pains of tender love. If I had an unprincipled lover, though he were to love me forever, where would I find assurances of this constancy? What means would I have of being delivered from my continual misgivings, and how could I be assured of not being deceived by either his falsity or my credulity? But you, my worthy and respectable friend, you who are incapable of either artifice or disguise; you will preserve, I know, the sincerity you pledge me. The shame of admitting an infidelity will not prevail in your righteous soul against the duty of keeping your word, and if you could cease to love your Julie, you would tell her....., aye, you could tell her, O Julie, I don't.... My friend, that is a word I shall never write.

What do you think of my expedient? It is the only one, I am sure, that could uproot any sentiment of jealousy in me. There is some ineffable delicacy that enchants me in entrusting your love to your good faith, and removing the possibility of believing in an infidelity of which you would not yourself have apprised me. There, my friend, is the assured effect of the commitment I demand of you; for I could think you a fickle lover, but not a deceitful friend, and even were I to have doubts about your heart, I could never doubt your faith. What pleasure it gives me to take needless precautions, to anticipate the appearances of a change I feel to be so impossible! How charming to discuss jealousy with so faithful a Lover! Ah, if you could cease to be one such, do not believe I could speak to you thus! My poor heart would not be so docile at a time of need, and the least suspicion on my part would swiftly suppress the will to safeguard myself against it.

There, my most honored master, are a few items to discuss this eve-

ning: for I know that your two humble Disciples will have the honor of supping with you at the home of the inseparable's father. Your learned commentaries on the gazette[74] have made you find such grace in his sight that it didn't take much maneuvering to get you invited. The daughter has had her Harpsichord tuned; the father has leafed through Lamberti[75]; as for me I shall perhaps rehearse the lesson of the bower at Clarens: O Doctor of all faculties, you have some relevant knowledge in every domain. Monsieur d'Orbe,[76] who is not forgotten, as you might think, has been primed to launch a learned dissertation on the future tribute due the king of Naples,[77] during which the three of us will slip into the Cousin's room. That is where, my liege, on your knees before your Lady and mistress, your two hands in hers and in presence of her Chancellor, you will swear to her unconditional faith and loyalty, not to say everlasting love, an engagement that one is master neither to keep nor to break, but truth, sincerity, inviolable candor. You will not swear always to be submissive, but to commit no felonious act, and to declare war at least before shaking off the yoke. Thus doing you shall receive the accolade, and be dubbed sole vassal and loyal Knight.

Farewell, my good Friend, the thought of this evening's supper fills me with gaiety. Ah! how sweet it will be when I see you sharing it with me!

LETTER XXXVI

From Julie

Kiss this letter and leap for joy at the news I have for you; but take my word that for not leaping and having no letter to kiss, I am not less pleased than you. My father being obliged to go to Berne for his lawsuit, and from there to Soleure[78] for his pension, has proposed to my mother that she accompany him, and she has accepted, hoping some salutary effect of the change of air for her health. They wanted to do me the favor of taking me too, and I did not deem it opportune to say what I thought of that: but the difficulty of arrangements for the coach led them to abandon that plan, and they are doing their best to console me for not going along. I had to feign sadness, and the false role I find myself forced to play makes me so authentically sad that remorse has all but relieved me of the need to feign.

During my parents' absence, I shall not remain mistress of the house; but they are depositing me with the Cousin's Father, so that during this time I shall really and truly be inseparable from the inseparable. There is more; my mother has preferred to do without her chambermaid and leave me Babi as governess: a sort of not very dangerous Argus[79] whose fidelity

should not be corrupted nor to whom should secrets be confided, but who can easily be got out of the way if needed, by the slightest glimmer of pleasure or gain offered them.

You understand how easy it will be for us to see each other for a fortnight; but this is where discretion must take the place of constraint, and we must voluntarily impose on ourselves the same reserve to which we are obliged in other times. Not only must you not, while I am at my Cousin's, come more often than before, for fear of compromising her; I also hope that nothing need be said either of the deference her sex requires, nor of the sacred rights of hospitality, and that an honorable man will have no need to be instructed on the respect due by love to the friendship that harbors it. I know your petulance, but I also know its inviolable limits. If you had never made a sacrifice to what is honest, you would not have to make one today.

Whence that discontented air and downcast look? Why murmur against the Laws that duty imposes on you? Leave to your Julie the care of relaxing them; did you ever regret having been obedient to her voice? Near the flowery hillsides from which flow the sources of the Vevaise,[80] there is a solitary hamlet that sometimes serves as a shelter for hunters and should serve only as a sanctuary for lovers. Round about the principal habitation, which is Monsieur d'Orbe's property, are scattered at some distance a few Chalets,*[81] which with their thatched roofs can cover love and pleasure, friends of rustic simplicity. The hale and discreet dairymaids know how to keep for others the secret they need for themselves. The streams that cross the meadows are lined with delightful shrubs and trees. Dense woods further on offer wilder and darker retreats.

> *Al bel seggio riposto ombroso e fosco*
> *Né mai pastori appressan né bifolci.*[82]
>
> To that lovely, hidden, shady and dark seat
> Neither shepherds came nor ploughmen.

Nowhere there does man's art or hand ever betray their disruptive ministries; there nothing can be seen all about but the tender ministries of the common Mother. There, my friend, one is under no auspices but hers and can respond to her laws only. On Monsieur d'Orbe's invitation, Claire has already persuaded her papa that he wanted to go hunting with some friends for two or three days in the Canton, and take along the Inseparables. These Inseparables have their own inseparables,[83] as you know only too well. One, representing the master of the house will naturally do its

* A sort of wooden houses where cheeses and various kinds of milk products are produced in the mountains.

honors; the other will be able to do for his Julie the less splendid honors of an humble chalet, and this chalet consecrated by love will for them be the Temple of Gnidus.[84] In order to execute happily and securely this charming scheme, there is just a matter of a few arrangements which we will easily concert among us, and which will themselves be part of the pleasures they are to produce. Farewell, my friend, I leave you abruptly, for fear of being caught. Besides, I feel that your Julie's heart is flying a bit too early to occupy the Chalet.

P. S. All things considered, I think we shall be able without being noticed to see each other almost every day; that is, at my Cousin's every other day, and the other days while we are out walking.

LETTER XXXVII

From Julie

My tender father and incomparable mother left this morning, bestowing the tenderest caresses on a beloved daughter, one too unworthy of their goodness. As for me, I embraced them with some heartache, while within itself, this ungrateful and denatured heart bubbled with an odious joy. Alas! what has become of the happy time when I constantly led under their eyes an innocent and pure life, when I was secure only on their breast, and could not be even a step away from them without displeasure? Now blameworthy and fearful, I tremble when I think of them, I blush when I think of myself; all my good sentiments are becoming depraved, and I waste away in vain and sterile regrets that are not even inspired by true repentance. These bitter reflections have inspired in me all the sadness that their farewells earlier had not. My soul choked up with a secret anguish after the departure of those dear parents. While Babi was preparing our baggage, I mechanically entered my mother's room, and seeing some of her clothes still strewn about, I kissed them all one after the other, melting in tears. This tearful state relieved me somewhat, and I found some consolation in feeling that the sweet movements of nature have not completely died in my heart. Ah, tyrant! in vain do you wish to subjugate completely this tender and too feeble heart; in spite of you, in spite of your spells, it still at least retains some legitimate sentiments, it still respects and cherishes rights more sacred than yours.

Forgive, O my sweet friend, these involuntary reactions, and do not fear that I shall extend these reflections as far as I ought. The moment of our lives, perhaps, when our love is freest, is not, I well know, that of re-

grets: I want neither to conceal my sorrows from you nor heap them on you; you must know about them, not to bear but to allay them. Into whose bosom would I pour them out, if I could not let them flow into yours? Are you not my tender comforter? Are you not the one who sustains my shaken courage? Are you not the one who fosters in my soul the taste for virtue, even after I have lost it? Without you, and without that adorable friend[85] whose compassionate hand so often wiped my tears, how many times would I not already have succumbed under the most fatal dejection? But your tender attentions sustain me; I dare not abase myself while you two still think well of me, and I tell myself indulgently that you would no longer love me, either of you, if I were worthy of nothing but contempt. I fly to the arms of that dear Cousin, or rather of that tender sister to deposit in her heart an unwanted sorrow. As for you, come this evening and restore fully to my own heart the joy and serenity it has lost.

LETTER XXXVIII

To Julie

No, Julie, I cannot see you every day simply as I saw you the day before: my love is bound to increase and grow incessantly with your charms, and you are for me an inexhaustible source of new sentiments that I would not even have imagined. What an inconceivable evening! To what unknown delights you introduced my heart! O enchanting sorrow! O languor of a soul that is moved! How far you surpass turbulent pleasures, and playful gaiety, and fits of joy, and all the transports a limitless ardor offers to the unbridled desires of lovers! Peaceful and pure ecstasy which nothing in the delights of the senses can equal, never, never will thy penetrating memory fade in my heart. Ye gods! what a ravishing spectacle or rather what ecstasy, to behold two such moving Beauties tenderly embracing, the one's face resting on the other's breast, their sweet tears flowing together, and bathing that charming breast as dew from Heaven moistens the freshly bloomed lily! I was jealous of such a tender friendship; it had seemed to me there was something more engaging about it than love itself, and I resented in a way my own inability to offer you such dear consolations, without troubling them by the turmoil of my transports. No, nothing, nothing on earth has the power to excite such a voluptuous empathy as your mutual caresses, and the spectacle of two lovers would have offered my eyes a sensation less delightful.

Ah, how in love I would have been at that moment with the lovable Cousin, had Julie not existed. But no, it was Julie herself who spread her

invincible charm over everything about her. Your dress, your toilet, your gloves, your fan, your needlework; everything around you that struck my eyes enchanted my heart, and you alone created the whole enchantment. Forbear, my sweet friend! By increasing my intoxication you would deprive me of the pleasure of feeling it. What you make me feel approaches a real delirium, and I fear it will finally make me lose my reason. Let me at least experience a distraction that brings me happiness; let me taste this new enthusiasm, more sublime, more intense than all my previous notions about love. What then, can you believe yourself debased! What, does passion take away your sense as well? For my part, I find you too perfect for a mortal. I would imagine you to be of a purer species, if the consuming fire that penetrates my very substance did not unite me with yours and make me feel that they are one and the same. No, no one on earth knows you; you do not know yourself; my heart alone knows you, feels you, and understands how to place you where you belong! My Julie! Ah, what homage would be denied you, were you merely worshipped! Ah! were you merely an angel, how your worth would decline!

Tell me how it is possible for a passion such as mine to increase? I do not know, but I am experiencing it. Although you are present to me at all times, it is only above all in the last few days that your image more beautiful than ever has pursued and tormented me with a relentlessness from which neither place nor time can shelter me, and I think you left me with it in that chalet you had visited at the end of your last letter. Since this country tryst has been in the offing, I have gone three times outside the town; each time my feet took me in the same direction, and each time the prospect of such a wished-for interlude seemed more agreeable.

> *Non vide il mondo sì leggiadri rami,*
> *Né mosse il vento mai sì verdi frondi.*
>
> The world never saw such graceful branches
> nor did the wind ever move such green leaves.[86]

I find the countryside more cheerful, the greenery more fresh and lively, the air more pure, the Sky more serene; the birdsong seems more tender and ecstatic; the babbling water inspires a more amorous languor; the vine blossoms in the distance give off sweeter perfumes; a secret charm beautifies every object or bewitches my senses, one would say that the earth decks herself out to offer your happy lover a nuptial bed worthy of the beauty he worships and the flame burning within him. O Julie! O dear and precious half of my soul, let us hasten to add to these springtime ornaments the presence of two faithful lovers; let us bring the sentiment of pleasure to those places which offer only its vain image; let us go animate

all of nature, it is dead without the flames of love. What! three days to wait? three days more? Drunk with love, hungry for transports, I await that belated moment with aching impatience. Ah! how happy we would be if Heaven plucked from life all the tedious intervals that separate us from such moments!

LETTER XXXIX

From Julie

You have not a single sentiment, my friend, that my heart does not share; but speak to me no more of pleasure so long as people who are better than we suffer and moan, and I have myself to blame for their pain. Read the letter enclosed here, and be unmoved by it if you can. I, who know the simple and winsome girl who wrote it, could not read it without tears of remorse and pity. Regret of my criminal negligence has pierced my soul, and I see with bitter embarrassment to what extent the neglect of my foremost duty led me to neglect all the others. I had promised to take care of that poor child; I was her protector in my mother's entourage; I kept her more or less under my watch, and for want of knowing how to watch over myself, I abandon her without a thought for her, and expose her to dangers worse than those to which I have succumbed. I shudder to think that perhaps two days later it would have been too late for my ward, and indigence and seduction would have been the undoing of a modest and proper girl who could some day make an excellent materfamilias. O my friend, how are there in the world men vile enough to buy out of misery a prize that only the heart should buy, and receive from famished lips the tender kisses of love!

Tell me, could you fail to be moved by the filial piety of my Fanchon, by her honest sentiments, her innocent simplicity? Are you not moved by the rare tenderness of that lover who sells himself to relieve his mistress? Will you not be only too happy to help bring about such a well-suited union? Ah if you and I lacked pity for united hearts that are being divided, from whom could they ever expect it? As for me, I have resolved to repair my truancy toward them at whatever price, and see to it that these two young people are united in marriage. I hope that Heaven will bless this enterprise, and that it will be a good omen for us. I propose and entreat you in the name of our friendship that you set out this very day, if you can, or tomorrow morning at the latest for Neuchâtel. Go negotiate with Monsieur de Merveilleux a discharge for this honest lad; spare neither supplications nor money; take with you my Fanchon's letter, there is no sensible heart it

would not melt. In all, whatever it may cost us in pleasure or money, do not return without Claude Anet's[87] absolute discharge, or else take it from me that love will never in my whole life give me a moment of pure joy.

I sense how many objections your heart must have for me; do you doubt mine has made them already? And I persist; for either that word virtue must be but an empty name, or it must require sacrifices.[88] My friend, my worthy friend, one unfulfilled tryst may return a thousand times; a few pleasant hours vanish like a flash and are no more; but if the happiness of an honest couple is in your hands, be mindful of the future you will be preparing for yourself. Believe me, an opportunity to make people happy is rarer than we think; the punishment for losing one is never to have it again, and the use we make of this one will leave us an everlasting sentiment of satisfaction or repentance. Forgive my zeal for this superfluous argument; I am saying too much for an honorable man, and a hundred times too much for my friend. I know how much you hate cruel sensuality that hardens us to others' sufferings. As you yourself have said a thousand times, woe to him who knows not how to sacrifice a day's pleasure to the duties of humanity.[89]

LETTER XL

From Fanchon Regard to Julie

Mademoiselle,

Forgive a poor girl in despair, who not knowing what will become of her dares once more to appeal to your kindness. For you never tire of consoling the afflicted, and I am so unfortunate that you and the good Lord alone are not weary of my cries. I was awfully sorry to give up the apprenticeship you had arranged for me; but having had the misfortune of losing my mother this winter, I had to come stay with my poor father who is paralyzed and must remain in bed all the time.

I have not forgotten the advice you had given my mother to try and settle me with an honorable man who would take care of the family. Claude Anet whom your worthy father had brought back from the service with him is a fine lad, a dependable one, who has learned a good trade, and is in love with me. After all the charity you have shown us, I did not dare bother you again, and it was he who kept us alive all winter. He was to marry me this spring; he had his heart set on this marriage. But I have been so hounded to pay three months' rent due at Easter, that not knowing where to find so much liquid cash, the poor young man has enlisted straightaway without a word to me in the Company of Monsieur de Mer-

veilleux, and brought me the money for his enlistment.[90] Monsieur de Merveilleux will be in Neufchâtel only for another seven or eight days, and Claude Anet is to leave within three or four days to march with the new band of recruits: so we have neither time nor means to get married, and he leaves me without any means of support. If through your credit or Monsieur the Baron's, you could obtain a delay of at least five or six weeks, we would try during that time to arrange for our marriage or to reimburse the poor lad: but I know him well: he will never consent to take back the money he gave me.

This morning a really rich Gentleman came and offered me a lot more; but God gave me the grace to turn him down. He said he would come back tomorrow morning to hear my final decision. I told him not to bother and that he knew it already. God guide him, he will be as welcome tomorrow as he was today. I also could have sought help from public charity, but then one is so scorned that it is better just to suffer: and then, Claude Anet is too proud ever to want a girl living on charity.

Excuse the liberty I am taking, dear Mademoiselle; I could think only of you to whom I dared confess my predicament, and my heart is so heavy that I must end this letter. Your very humble and devoted servant for your service,

Fanchon Regard.

LETTER XLI

Reply

I have been wanting in memory and you in confidence, my dear child; we have both been quite wrong, but my mistake is unforgivable: I shall at least try to redeem it. Babi, who is bringing you this Letter, is commissioned to see to what is most pressing. She will return tomorrow morning to help you dismiss this Gentleman, if he returns, and in the afternoon we shall come see you, my Cousin and I; for I know you cannot leave your poor father's side, and I want to see for myself the state of your little household.

As for Claude Anet, do not worry about him; my father is away; but while awaiting his return we will do what we can, and you may be sure I shall forget neither you nor that fine lad. Farewell, my child, may the good Lord comfort you. You did wisely not to resort to public charity; that is something you should never do, so long as something remains in good people's purses.

LETTER XLII

To Julie

I have your Letter and am setting out immediately: that is all the reply I shall make. Ah cruel Julie! How far my heart is from that odious virtue you give me credit me for, and which I detest! But you command, I must obey. Should I die a hundred times for it, I must have Julie's esteem.

LETTER XLIII

To Julie

I arrived yesterday morning at Neufchâtel; I learned that Monsieur de Merveilleux was in the country, and hurried to join him there; he was out hunting and I waited for him until evening. When I had explained to him the subject of my journey, and asked him to set a price on Claude Anet's discharge, he raised many objections. I thought I could lift them, by taking it on myself to offer a rather considerable sum, and increasing it the longer he held out; but obtaining nothing, I was obliged to withdraw, after making sure I could meet with him again this morning, firmly determined never again to leave him until by dint of money, or insistence, or whatever possible means, I should have obtained what I came to request. After arising very early to that end, I was about to mount my horse, when I received by Messenger this note from Monsieur de Merveilleux, with the young man's discharge in due form.

Here, Monsieur, is the discharge you came to solicit. I have refused it to your offers. I give it to your charitable intentions, and beg you to believe that I set no price on a good deed.

You may judge, by the joy this happy outcome will bring you, of my own in learning of it. Why must it be less perfect than it should be? I cannot avoid going to thank and reimburse Monsieur de Merveilleux, and if this errand delays my departure by a day as is to be feared, have I not the right to say that he has proven generous at my expense? No matter, I have done what you thought appropriate, I can bear anything at that cost. How happy one is to be able to do good while serving one's beloved, and thus combine in the same effort the charms of love and virtue. I confess, O Julie! that I left with a heart full of impatience and dismay. I faulted you for being so sensible to others' woes, and counting my own for nothing, as if I were the only person on earth who has deserved nothing from you. I

found some cruelty, after luring me with such a sweet hope, in depriving me unnecessarily of a benefit you yourself had led me to expect. All this grumbling has evaporated; in its place I feel welling up in my soul an unknown satisfaction; I already am receiving the consolation you promised me, you whom the habit of generosity has so well taught the taste one acquires for it. What a strange empire is yours, with the power to make privations as sweet as pleasures, and lend to what one does for you the same charm one would find in contenting oneself! Ah, as I have said a hundred times, you are an angel from Heaven, my Julie! No doubt with such authority over my soul, yours is more divine than human. How could I not be everlastingly yours since your realm is celestial, and what good would it do to stop loving you if I must continue to worship you?

P. S. According to my calculations, we still have at least five or six days until Mother's return. Would it not be possible in that interval to make a pilgrimage to the Chalet?

LETTER XLIV

From Julie

Do not grumble so, my friend, at this precipitous return. It is more advantageous to us than it seems, and even if we had done by way of strategy what we have done out of benefaction we should not have succeeded better. Just look at what would have happened if we had followed only our fancies. I would have gone to the country precisely on the eve of my mother's return to town: a messenger would have come before I could have brought off our interview; I would have had to leave at once, perhaps without notifying you, leaving you in a frightful quandary, and our separation would have taken place at the moment that would have made it the most painful. Moreover, it would have been known that we were both in the country; despite our precautions, it would perhaps have been known that we were together; at least it would have been suspected, and that would have been enough. The imprudent greed of the present was about to deprive us of all resource for the future, and the remorse of having disdained a good deed would have tormented us all our lives.

Now compare that state with our present real situation. First your absence has had an excellent effect. My Argus[91] cannot have failed to tell my mother that you have been little seen at my Cousin's; she knows about your journey and its purpose; that is another reason for thinking highly of

you; and how can they imagine that people who are close would willingly go away the first moment they are free to get together? What ruse did we employ to forestall an all too well deserved suspicion? The only one, in my view, that honest people can allow themselves, which is to be honest to the point of disbelief, so much so that a virtuous effort is construed as an act of indifference. My friend, how sweet a love hidden by such means must be to the hearts that savor it! Add to that the pleasure of reuniting disheartened lovers, and bringing happiness to two young people so worthy of it. You have seen my Fanchon; tell me, isn't she charming, and doesn't she well deserve all you have done for her? Isn't she too pretty and unhappy to remain unmarried without ill consequences? As for Claude Anet, whose good natural disposition by miracle held up through three years of service —would he have been able to bear as much again without becoming a miscreant like the rest? Instead of that, they love each other and will be united; they are poor and will be assisted; they are honest people and can continue to be; for my father has promised to take care of setting up their household. How much good you have procured for them and for us by your good will, not to mention the reward I owe you for it! Such, my friend, is the sure effect of the sacrifices one makes to virtue: though making them often has its cost, it is always sweet to have done so, and no one has ever been known to regret a good deed.

I expect you will call me *the preacher*,[92] just as the Inseparable does, and it is true that I don't do what I say any better than people in the trade. If my sermons are not as good as theirs, at least I perceive with pleasure that they are not like theirs thrown to the winds. I don't deny, my gentle friend, that I would like to add to your virtues as many as my irrational love has made me lose, and having lost the ability to respect myself, I like to respect myself still in you. For your part all you have to do is love perfectly, and everything will work out as if by itself. With what pleasure must you watch the debts pile up that love obliges itself to pay!

My Cousin has learned of the discussions you had with her father on the subject of Monsieur d'Orbe; she is as grateful for this as if we could not forever be indebted to her where services to friendship are concerned. My God, my friend, what a fortunate maiden I am! How loved I am, and how wonderful that is for me! Father, mother, friend, lover, however much I cherish everyone about me, I am constantly being either anticipated or surpassed. It seems as if all the sweetest sentiments in the world come endlessly to seek out my soul, and it is my regret to have but one with which to enjoy all my happiness.

I almost forgot to announce a visit for tomorrow morning. It is Milord

Bomston[93] who is coming from Geneva where he has spent seven or eight months. He says he saw you in Sion on his journey back from Italy. He found you quite sad, and moreover speaks of you the way I think. Yesterday he sang your praises so well and so conveniently to my father, that he wholly disposed me to sing his. Indeed I found sense, humor, and fire in his conversation. His voice rises and his eyes light up when he recounts great deeds, as happens with men capable of performing them. He also discusses things of taste with interest, among others Italian music, which he praises to the skies; I thought I was still hearing my poor brother. In addition he speaks with more energy than grace and I even find his wit a little harsh.* Farewell, my Friend.

LETTER XLV

To Julie

I was still in just my second reading of your letter, when Milord Edward Bomston came in. With so many other things to tell you, how could I have thought, my Julie, to tell you about him? When we suffice to each other does it ever occur to us to think of a third party? I shall give you an account of what I know about him, now that you appear to wish it.

Having passed the Simplon, he had come to Sion to meet a chaise that was supposed to have been brought to him from Geneva to Brig,[94] and since idleness makes men seek company, he looked me up. We struck up as intimate an acquaintance as is possible between a naturally unprepossessing Englishman and a very preoccupied man who seeks solitude. However we felt that we were suited to each other; there is a certain unison of souls that can be perceived at the first instant, and we were on easy terms after eight days, but for life, as two Frenchmen would have been after eight hours, for as long as they should remain together. He told me about his travels, and knowing he was English, I thought he was going to talk about buildings and paintings: I soon perceived with pleasure that Tableaux and monuments had not led him to neglect the study of men and manners. However he spoke to me of the fine arts with much discernment, but moderately and without pretension.[95] I surmised that he judged them more by sentiment than science and by effects more than rules, which confirmed

* A local term [*rêche*], here taken metaphorically. Literally it means a surface rough to the touch and which causes a disagreeable shudder when the hand is passed over it, like that of a very stiff brush or Utrecht velvet.

me in the opinion that he had a sensible soul. As for Italian music, he seemed to me an enthusiast as he did to you: he even had me listen to some; for he has a virtuoso accompanying him, his valet plays the violin quite well, and he himself plays the cello passably. He chose for me several very pathetic pieces, as he qualified them; but whether because an accent so new to me requires a more experienced ear; or because the music's charm, so sweet and melancholic, fades away amidst deep sadness, these pieces gave me little pleasure, and I found the melody agreeable, in truth, but strange and lacking in expression.

We also talked about me, and Milord inquired with interest into my situation. I told him everything he was entitled to know about it. He proposed a trip to England with impossibly ambitious schemes, in a country where Julie did not exist. He told me he was going to spend the winter in Geneva, the following summer in Lausanne, and that he would come to Vevey before returning to Italy, he has kept his word, and we have met again with renewed pleasure.

As for his character, I believe it to be impulsive and impetuous, but virtuous and staunch. He has pretensions to philosophy, and to those principles which we have formerly discussed. But truly, I think he is by temperament what he thinks he is by method, and the Stoic veneer he gives to his actions consists only in embellishing with nice reasonings the choice his heart has led him to make. I have however learned with some misgivings that he had had some misadventures in Italy, and had several times fought duels.

I do not know what you find harsh in his manners; in truth they are not prepossessing, but I don't find in them anything repellent. Although at first he seems less open than his soul really is, and disdains petty conventions, he never fails, it seems to me, to prove agreeable company. Though he does not possess the reserved and circumspect politeness that attends purely to outside appearances, and which our young Officers bring us from France, he has the politeness of humanity which is less concerned to sort out estates and ranks at first glance, and respects all men in general. Shall I admit it candidly? The want of grace is a flaw women do not forgive, even to merit, and I am afraid that Julie may have been a woman once in her life.

Since I am in a sincere mode, I shall also tell you, my pretty preacher, that it is futile to try to short-change my rights, and that a famished love does not feed on sermons. Remember, remember the damages promised and due; for all the morality you have served up to me is very fine; but, whatever you may say, the Chalet was better still.

LETTER XLVI
From Julie

Now there, my friend, forever the chalet? This business of the chalet weighs wondrous heavy on your heart, and I see that when all is said and done you must have your way about the chalet! But are places where you have never been so dear that one cannot offer you consolation elsewhere, and is love, which buried Armida's palace[96] in a wilderness not able to make a chalet for us in town? Listen: we are going to marry my Fanchon. My father, who is not averse to great occasions and festivities, wants to give her a wedding we shall all attend: this wedding will not fail to be tumultuous. Sometimes mystery has a way of extending its veil in the midst of turbulent joy and the din of feasts. You hear me, my friend, would it not be sweet to recover through the results of our efforts the pleasures they have cost us?

You become exercised, it appears to me, with rather superfluous zeal over your defense of Milord Edward, of whom I am very far from thinking ill. Moreover how would I judge a man whom I have seen only one afternoon, and how could you judge him yourself based on an acquaintance of a few days? I speak of him only on conjecture, and you can hardly be further advanced than I; for the propositions he made you are the kind of vague offer of which strangers are often prodigal, giving them as they do an air of importance, and being easy to elude. But I recognize your usual impulsiveness and the extent to which you are inclined to feel positively or negatively about people almost from first sight. Still we shall examine more at leisure the arrangements he has proposed to you. If love favors the plan I have in mind, perhaps better ones will come along. O my good friend, patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet!

To come back to your Englishman, I told you he seemed to me to possess a great and strong soul, and a mind more enlightened than polished. You say approximately the same thing, and then, with that air of masculine superiority of which our humble worshippers are never free, you reproach me with having been of my own sex once in my life, as if a woman should ever cease to be! Do you remember that once while reading your Plato's *Republic*[97] we disputed this point of the moral difference between the sexes? I persist in the opinion I then held, and am unable to imagine a common model of perfection for two beings so different. Attack and defense, men's audacity and women's modesty, are not conventions, as the philosophers think, but natural institutions the causes of which can easily be rationally explained, and from which are easily derived all other moral distinctions.[98]

Moreover, nature's destination for them not being the same, the inclinations, manners of seeing and feeling must be directed in each instance in accordance with her views; it does not at all require the same tastes nor the same constitution to till the land and to nurse children. A taller frame, a stronger voice, and more prominent features seem to have no necessary connection with sex; but external modifications proclaim the maker's intention in the modifications of the mind. A perfect woman and a perfect man must be no more alike in soul than in countenance; such vain imitations between the sexes are the height of unreason; they make the wise man laugh and cupids flee. And finally, it seems to me that unless one is five and a half feet tall, has a bass voice and a beard on one's chin, one has no business being a man.

See how clumsy are lovers' insults! You chide me for a mistake I have not committed or which you commit as much as I, and you attribute it to a flaw which to me is honorable. Would you like for me, rendering sincerity for sincerity, to tell you frankly what I think of yours? I find in it merely a refinement of flattery, to justify to yourself by such ostensible candor the enthusiastic eulogies you shower me with at every opportunity. You are so blinded by my so-called perfections that you haven't wit enough to find, in order to negate your inner embarrassment over your prepossession, a single solid reproach to make to me.

Take it from me, do not take it upon yourself to tell me the truth about myself, you would do too poor a job; are the eyes of love, as penetrating as they are, able to see flaws? These responsibilities belong to uncompromising friendship, and on that head your disciple Claire is a hundred times more knowledgeable than you. Yes, my friend, praise me, admire me, say I am beautiful, enchanting, perfect. Your eulogies please me without seducing me, because I see they are the language of error and not falsehood, and that you are fooling yourself, but are not trying to fool me. Oh how lovable are the illusions of love! Its flatteries are in a sense verities: judgment holds its tongue, but the heart speaks. The lover who praises in us perfections we do not possess sees them indeed as he represents them; he does not lie as he utters lies; he flatters without debasing himself, and one can at least think well of him without believing him.

I have heard it proposed, not without some heart flutter, that we have two philosophers to supper tomorrow. One is Milord Edward, the other is a sage whose gravity has on occasion been somewhat unsettled at the feet of a young schoolgirl; might you not know him? Exhort him, I beg you, to try tomorrow to maintain philosophical decorum a little better than he usually does. I shall take care to notify the little lady also to lower her eyes, and to be for his as unpretty as possible.

LETTER XLVII
To Julie

Ah, mischievous maid! Is this the circumspection you had promised me? Is this how you spare my heart and veil your charms? How many violations of your commitments! First of all, your adornment; for you wore none, and you know full well that you are never so bewitching.[99] Secondly your demeanor so gentle, so modest, so apt to allow all your graces to be discovered at leisure. Your way of talking, yet more spare, more reflective, more witty than usual, which made us all more attentive, and caused the ear and the heart to grasp at every word. That air you sang *mezza voce*, to lend still more sweetness to your singing, and which, although French, pleased even Milord Edward. Your timid glance, and your lowered eyes whose unexpected flashes unfailingly troubled my senses. And lastly, that inexpressible enchantment you seem to have strewn over your entire person to make everyone's head turn, apparently without even giving it a thought. I do not know, for my part, how you go about it; but if such is your way of being as unpretty as possible, let me point out to you that it is far more pretty than is required for being surrounded by sages.

I greatly fear that the poor English philosopher has to some degree undergone the same influence. After seeing your Cousin to her house, since we were all still quite awake, he invited us to come to his place to make Music and drink punch.[100] While his servants were assembled, he kept on talking about you with a warmth that displeased me, and I did not hear your eulogy in his mouth with as much pleasure as you had heard mine. In general, I confess that I do not like to hear anyone, except your Cousin, talk to me about you; it seems to me that every word robs me of part of my secret or my pleasures; and whatever they may say, either it hints at an element of interest I find suspect, or it is so far from what I myself feel, that on that subject there is no one but myself I like to listen to.

It is not that I am like you inclined to jealousy. I know your soul better than that; I have warrants that do not allow me even to imagine that any change in you is possible. After your assurances, I have nothing more to say about the other suitors. But this one, Julie!..... commensurate ranks..... your father's prejudices..... You know full well that my life is at stake; be so good therefore as to say a word to me about that. A word from Julie, and I am tranquil forever.

I have spent the night listening to or performing Italian music, for there were duets that came up and I had to have a go at singing my part. I dare not tell you yet what effect it had on me; I fear, yes I fear that the im-

pression left from last evening's supper may have been projected onto what I was hearing, and that I may have taken the effect of your seductions for the charm of the music. Why could not the same cause that made it tedious to me at Sion, here make it agreeable in a reverse situation? Are you not the prime source of all my soul's affections, and am I proof against the spells of your magic? Had the music really produced this enchantment, it would have acted on all those who were listening. But while these songs were holding me in thrall, Monsieur d'Orbe was quietly sleeping in an armchair, and in the midst of my transports, his only word of praise was to ask whether your Cousin knew Italian.

All this will be cleared up some tomorrow; for we have this evening a new musical engagement. Milord intends to complement the music and has sent to Lausanne for a second violin he claims to be quite skilled. I shall bring along as my contribution some scenes,[101] some French cantatas, and we shall see!

When arriving at home I felt great exhaustion from being so unaccustomed to staying up late but it goes away as I write to you. Yet I must try to sleep for a few hours. Come with me, my sweet friend, do not leave me during my sleep; but whether your image troubles it or favors it, whether it offers me Fanchon's wedding or not, one delightful instant it is preparing for me and that can't escape me, is the sentiment of happiness on awakening.

LETTER XLVIII

To Julie

Ah! My Julie, what have I heard? What stirring sounds! What music! What delightful source of sentiments and pleasures! Do not waste an instant; carefully gather up all your operas, your cantatas, your French music, make a big, really hot fire, throw all that stuff in, and poke it well, so all that ice can burn and at least for once give off heat. Make this burnt offering to the God of taste, to expiate your crime and mine in having profaned your voice with that dull chanting, and so long mistaken a noise that only stuns the ear for the language of the heart. Oh how right was your worthy brother! In what strange error I have lived until now about the productions of this enchanting art? I felt how slight were their effects, and attributed that to its weakness. I said, music is but an empty sound that can flatter the ear and acts only indirectly and faintly upon the soul. The impression of chords is purely mechanical and physical; what has it to do with sentiment, and why should I expect to be more moved by a beautiful

harmony than by a beautiful combination of colors? I did not perceive in the accents of melody applied to those of language the powerful and secret connection of the passions with the sounds; I did not see that the imitation of the various registers by which sentiments animate the speaking voice confers in turn on the singing voice the power to stir hearts, and that the performer's energetic tableau of the movements of his soul is what constitutes the true charm of the listeners.

This is what Milord's singer, who, for a Musician, always speaks rather well about his art, led me to see. Harmony, he said, is only a distant accessory in imitative music: in harmony proper there is no principle of imitation. It insures pitch, it is true; it bears witness to its accuracy and by making the modulations more sensible, adds energy to the expression and grace to the singing: but it is from the melody alone that this invincible power of impassioned accents arises; from it derives the whole power of music over the soul; devise the most learned successions of chords without admixture of melody, and you will all be bored after a quarter of an hour. Lovely melodies without any harmony can hold out a long time against boredom. Let the accents of sentiment animate the simplest melodies, and they will be engaging. On the contrary, a melody that does not speak always sings badly, and harmony alone never could say anything to the heart.

In this consists, he continued, the Frenchmen's error on the strengths of music. Having, and being able to have, no melody of their own in a language devoid of accents,[102] and for a mannered poetry unakin to nature, the only effects they imagine are those of harmony and shouts that make the sounds not more melodious but more noisy, and they are so pathetic in their pretensions that the very harmoniousness they are pursuing escapes them; by trying to make it more intense they have become unselective, they have lost the sense of what creates an effect, they create nothing but filler, they ruin their ear, and are no longer sensible to anything but noise; with the result that the most beautiful voice for them is but the one that sings the loudest. And so, lacking a genre of their own all they have ever done is to imitate our models ponderously and from afar; and ever since their famous Lulli or rather ours,[103] who merely imitated the Operas that were all over Italy in his time, they have always been thirty or forty years behind us, copying and spoiling our old Composers and treating our music more or less the way other peoples do their fashions. When they vaunt their songs, they pronounce their own condemnation; if they knew how to sing sentiments they would not sing wit, but because their music expresses nothing, it is better suited to songs than to Operas, and because our own is thoroughly impassioned, it is better suited to Operas than to songs.

Then after reciting without song a few Italian scenes, he gave me a sense of the relation of music to words in the recitative, of music to sentiment in the airs, and in both the energy that exact measure and choice of chords add to expression. Finally after joining to what I know of the language the best notion I could have of oratory and pathetic accent, in other words the art of speaking to the ear and the heart in a language without articulating words, I began to listen to that enchanting music, and I soon sensed from the emotions it provoked in me that this art had a power greater than I had imagined. Some unknown voluptuous sensation imperceptibly came over me. It was no longer an empty sequence of sounds, as in our *récits*.[104] At each phrase some image entered my brain or some sentiment my heart; the pleasure did not stop at the ear, but entered the soul; the execution flowed effortlessly with a charming facility; all the instrumentalists seemed moved by the same spirit; the singer, master of his voice, easily drew from it everything the song and words required of him, and above all I found great relief in hearing neither the heavy cadences, nor the painful vocal strains, nor the constraint inflicted on the musician in our country by the perpetual struggle of melody with the meter, which, since they can never agree, weary the listener no less than the performer.

But when following a series of agreeable airs, we came to those grand expressive pieces, which can excite and depict the disorder of violent passions, I lost at every moment the notion of music, song, imitation; I thought I was hearing the voice of grief, rage, despair; in my mind's eye I saw mothers in tears, lovers betrayed, furious Tyrants, and in the agitations I was forced to experience I could scarcely keep still. Then I understood why this same music that had previously bored me now excited me to the point of transport: it is because I had begun to grasp it, and because once it could act it acted in all its force. No, Julie, such impressions cannot be sustained halfway; they are excessive or nil, never weak or mediocre; one must remain insensible or allow oneself to be moved beyond measure; either it is the empty noise of a language you do not understand, or it is an impetuosity of sentiment that pulls you along, and that it is impossible for the soul to resist.

I had only one regret; but I was never free from it; it was that someone other than you should produce sounds I was so moved by, and to see the tenderest expressions of love coming from the mouth of a vile *castrato*.[105] O my Julie! Is it not for us to claim all that belongs to sentiment? Who will feel, who will say better than we what the soul that is stirred should say and feel? Who will be able to utter in a more touching voice *cor mio* and *idolo amato*? Ah what energy the heart will lend to art, if ever we sing together one of those enchanting duets that draw such delicious tears! I im-

plore you first to hear a sample of this music, either at home, or at the Inseparable's. Whenever you wish Milord will bring his whole entourage along, and I am sure that having a voice as sensible as yours, and more familiarity than I had with Italian declamation, a single session will suffice to bring you to the point where I am, and make you share my enthusiasm. I suggest and beg you further to take advantage of the virtuoso's stay here to take lessons from him, as I have begun to do this morning. His manner of teaching is simple, clear, and consists more in practice than in words; he does not tell you what you must do, he does it, and in this as in so many other things example is superior to rules. I already see that all I have to do is adhere to the meter, sense it correctly, phrase and punctuate carefully, sustain sounds equally and not inflate them, finally to rid the voice of the forced style and all the French frills, in order to make it exact, expressive, and flexible; yours so naturally light and sweet will easily adopt this new habit; you will quickly discover in your sensibility the energy and vivacity of the accent that animates Italian music,

E 'l cantar che ne l'anima si sente.[106]

And singing that is felt in the soul.

So abandon forever that boring and lamentable French song that is more like the cries of colic than the transports of passion. Learn to produce those divine sounds inspired by sentiment, the only ones worthy of your voice, the only ones worthy of your heart, and which always carry along with them the charm and fire of sensible temperaments.[107]

LETTER XLIX

From Julie

You are quite aware, my friend, that I can write you only by stealth, and always at the risk of being discovered. Thus, given the impossibility of writing long letters I limit myself to replying to what is most essential in yours, or supplementing what I have only been able to tell you in conversations no less furtive by mouth than in writing. This is mainly what I shall do today since two words on the subject of Milord Edward cause me to forget the rest of your letter.

My friend, you fear you will lose me and you talk to me about songs! A fine subject to wrangle over for lovers who are less close. Truly, you are not jealous, that can clearly be seen; but this time I will not be jealous myself, for I have sounded your soul and I sense only your confidence where oth-

ers would think they sense your coldness. Oh the sweet and charming security that comes from the sentiment of a perfect union! It is thanks to this security, I well know, that you draw from your own heart good witness of mine, it is also thanks to it that mine justifies you, and I should think you much less enamored if I saw you were more alarmed.

I neither know nor wish to know whether Milord Edward has attentions for me different from those of all men for persons of my age; the question has to do not with his sentiments but with my father's and my own; they are as much in agreement with respect to him as to the pretended pretenders, of whom you say you have nothing to say. If his exclusion and theirs is all your peace of mind requires, then rest easy. Whatever honor the suit of a man of such rank might do us, never with the consent of either father or daughter will Julie d'Étange be Lady Bomston. That you may count on.

Don't go believing that the question of Milord Edward has even come up; I am sure that of the four of us you are the only one who could even suppose he had any interest in me. Be that as it may, I know my father's will in this regard without his having spoken of it either to me or to anyone, and I would not be better informed if he had positively declared it to me. This should be enough to calm your fears, that is to say as much as you must know about it. The rest for you would be pure curiosity, and you know I have resolved not to satisfy it. There is no point in your reproaching me for this reticence and pretending there is no room for it in our common interests. Had I always manifested it, it would be less essential to me today. But for my indiscreet report to you of one of my father's remarks, you would not have gone off to despair at Meillerie; you would not have written me the letter that undid me; I would live in innocence and could still aspire to happiness. Imagine by what a single indiscretion costs me, what fear I must have of committing others! You are too impetuous to be prudent; you could sooner overcome your passions than disguise them. The slightest alarm would send you into a rage; at the slightest favorable glimmer you would be completely sure of yourself! All our secrets could be read in your soul, and in your zeal you would nullify all the success of my labors. Therefore leave to me the concerns of love, and keep only its pleasures; is this division so painful, and do you not sense that the only thing you can do for our happiness is not to put anything in its way?

Alas, what good to me now are such belated precautions? Is there still time to steady one's steps at the bottom of the abyss, and to prevent the woes by which one feels overwhelmed? Ah wretched maid, how can you speak of happiness! Can there ever be happiness where shame and remorse prevail? God! What a cruel state, not to be able to bear one's crime, nor to

repent of it; to be besieged by a thousand terrors, deluded by a thousand vain hopes, and not even to enjoy the horrible tranquillity of despair! I am henceforth at the sole mercy of fate. It is no longer either force or virtue that is at issue, but fortune and prudence, and what we have to do is not to put out a love that is bound to last as long as I live, but to render it innocent or die guilty. Reflect on this situation, my friend, and see whether you can entrust yourself to my zeal?

LETTER L

From Julie

I did not wish to explain to you last night when I left you the cause of the sadness for which you reproached me, because you were not in a condition to hear me out. Despite my aversion for explanations, I owe you this one, because I have promised it, and I shall acquit myself of it.

I do not know whether you remember the extraordinary things you said to me last night and the behavior that went along with them; for my part, I will never forget them soon enough for your honor and my peace of mind, and unfortunately I am too indignant over them to be able to forget them easily. Phrases of that sort had sometimes fallen on my ears when I passed near the port; but I did not believe they could ever come from the mouth of an honorable man; I am very sure at least that they never entered the dictionary of lovers, and I was very far from thinking that they could ever come into use between you and me. Ye gods, what kind of love is yours, if it seasons its pleasures thus! You were, it is true, just ending a long meal, and I see that in this country excesses that can be committed in those circumstances have to be forgiven: and that is why I am taking it up with you. Be sure that if you had addressed me in this way in private, and in complete possession of yourself, that would have been our last meeting ever.

But what alarms me in your regard is that often the comportment of a man under the influence of wine is but the effect of what is taking place in his heart the rest of the time. Am I to believe that in a condition where one disguises nothing you revealed yourself such as you are? What would become of me if you thought when sober the way you were talking last night? Rather than put up with such contempt I would sooner douse such a vulgar flame, and lose a lover who, so unskilled in the ways of honoring his mistress, could so ill merit her esteem. Tell me, you who used to value honest sentiments, might you have fallen into that cruel fallacy that love rewarded no longer owes any deference to modesty, and needs no longer

respect women whose resistance is no longer to be feared? Ah! If this had always been your way of thinking, you would have been less to be feared, and I would not be so unhappy! Make no mistake, my friend, nothing is so dangerous for true lovers as the world's prejudices; so many people talk about love, and so few know how to love, that most of them take as its pure and gentle laws the vile maxims of an abject traffic that soon satiated by its own devices calls on monsters of the imagination and falls into depravity in order to sustain itself.

I know not if I delude myself; but it seems to me that true love is the most chaste of all bonds. It alone with its divine flame knows the art of purifying our natural inclinations, by concentrating them onto a single person; it alone spares us temptations, and makes it so that except for that one unique person, one sex ceases to be anything for the other.[108] For an ordinary woman, every man is always a man; but for her whose heart loves, there is no man but her lover. What did I say? Is a lover but a man? Ah, how much more sublime a being he is! There is no man for her who loves: her lover is more; all the others are less; she and he are the only ones of their species. They do not desire, they love. The heart does not follow the senses, it guides them; it throws over their ecstasies a delightful veil. No, nothing is obscene except debauchery and its vulgar language. Genuine love, always modest, does not audaciously snatch favors; it timidly makes off with them. Mystery, silence, fearful shame sharpen and conceal its sweet transports; its flame honors and purifies its every caress; decency and honesty accompany it in the lap of ecstasy itself, and love alone knows how to grant everything to desire without compromising modesty. Ah tell me! You who tasted true pleasures; how could cynical effrontery ally itself with them? Would it not exclude their delirium and all the charm that goes with them? Would it not sully that image of perfections through which one takes pleasure in gazing upon the loved one? Believe me, my friend, debauchery and love are incapable of dwelling together, and cannot even compensate for each other. The heart affords the true happiness of those who love each other, and nothing can take its place the moment they no longer do.

But even were you so wretched as to enjoy that dishonorable language, how could you have allowed yourself to use it so inappropriately, and adopt with the woman you cherish a tone and behavior which a man of honor should not even know? Since when has it been agreeable to hurt one's beloved, and what is this heartless delight that takes pleasure in relishing the torment of others? I have not forgotten that I have lost the right to be respected; but if I ever did forget, is it for you to remind me? Is it for him who caused my fault to augment its punishment? It should rather be

for him to console me. Everyone has the right to disdain me except you. You owe me the price of the humiliation to which you have reduced me, and so many tears shed over my weakness deserved that you should make me less cruelly aware of it. I am neither prudish nor persnickety.[109] Alas, how far from it, I who did not manage even to be virtuous! You know too well, ungrateful friend, whether this tender heart can refuse anything to love. But at least what it yields, it wants to yield only to love, and you have taught me its language too well to be able to put such a different one in its place. Insults and blows would do me less violence than caresses like those. Either renounce Julie, or learn how to hold her esteem. I have already told you, for me there is no such thing as love without modesty; though losing yours would have its cost, it would be costlier still to keep it at that price.

I still have a great deal to say on that subject; but I have to finish this letter and shall keep it for another time. In the meanwhile, take note of an effect of your false maxims concerning the immoderate use of wine.[110] Your heart is not guilty, I am very sure of that. However you have wounded mine, and without knowing what you were doing, you were afflicting as if wantonly a heart that too quickly takes alarm, and to whom nothing is indifferent that comes from you.

LETTER LI

Reply

There is not a line in your letter that does not chill my blood, and I can scarcely believe, after rereading it twenty times, that it is addressed to me. Who, me, me? Could I have offended Julie? Could I have profaned her charms? She to whom every instant of my life I offer adoration, could have been exposed to offensive behavior on my part? No, I would a thousand times have pierced my own heart before it could have entertained such a heartless design. Ah, how little you know this heart that idolizes you! This heart that rushes to fall down under your every step! This heart that would invent for you new forms of homage unknown to mortals! How little you know it, O Julie, if you accuse it of lacking for you the ordinary and common respect that even a vulgar lover would have for his mistress! I do not think I am either impudent or brutal, I hate dishonorable words and never in all my days entered a place where one learns to use them. But, let me repeat it after you, let me outdo your just indignation: were I the vilest of mortals, had I spent my early years in boozing, could the taste of shameful pleasures find room in a heart where you reign, oh tell me, Julie, angel

from Heaven, tell me how I could bring into your presence the effrontery one can have only with women who like it? Ah no, it is not possible! A single glance from you would have held my tongue and purified my heart. Love would have covered my unleashed desires with the charms of your modesty; love would have triumphed over it without resorting to violence, and in the sweet union of our souls, only their delirium would have produced the errors of the senses. I appeal to your own testimony. Tell me whether, in all the raptures of an unlimited passion, I ever ceased to respect its charming object? If I received the prize my flame had merited, tell me whether I ever took advantage of my happiness to do violence to your bashfulness? If with a timid hand my ardent, trembling love sometimes assaulted your charms, tell me whether its brutal temerity ever dared to profane them? When an indiscreet transport pushes aside for an instant the veil that covers them, does not endearing modesty immediately substitute its own in its place? Would that sacred vestment ever abandon you for a moment if you had none other? Incorruptible like your honest soul, has it ever been tainted by all the cravings of mine? Does this union so touching and so tender not suffice for our felicity? Does it not alone constitute the entire happiness of our lives? Do we have any pleasures in the world besides those that love provides? Would we want others? Can you conceive how this enchantment could have been dispelled? How in a moment could I have forgotten honesty, our love, my honor, and the invincible respect I would always have had for you, even had I not adored you? No, do not believe it; it is surely not I who was capable of offending you. I have no recollection of that; and had I been guilty even for an instant, would I ever be free from remorse? No Julie, a demon jealous of a fate too happy for a mortal has assumed my form to disrupt it, and left me my heart to make me more miserable.

I abjure, I abhor, a crime I have committed, since you accuse me of it, but in which my will took no part. How I shall loathe that fatal intemperance which I believed would favor the outpouring of my heart, and instead has so cruelly belied mine! I give you an inviolable oath, from this day and for my whole life I renounce wine as the deadliest of poisons; never shall that lethal liquor derange my senses; never shall it defile my lips, and its insane delirium shall never again make me commit a crime of which I am unaware. If I break this solemn vow, Love, inflict on me a fitting punishment: may my Julie's image instantly desert my heart forever, and abandon it to indifference and despair.

Do not think I am hoping to expiate my crime with so light a sentence. It is a precaution and not a punishment. I await from you the one I have deserved. I implore it to relieve my regrets. Let offended love avenge and

appease itself; punish me without hate, I shall suffer without murmur. Be just and severe; you must, I submit to it; but if you mean to leave me life, take anything from me save your heart.

LETTER LII

From Julie

How now, my friend, renounce wine for your mistress? Now that is what I call a sacrifice! Oh, I defy anyone to find anywhere in the four Cantons[111] a man more enamored than you! Not that there are not among our youth some little Frenchified Messieurs who drink water to give themselves airs,[112] but you will be the first who ever drank any out of love; it is an example to be cited in the annals of Swiss gallantry. I have even informed myself of your movements, and I have been extremely edified to learn that supping yesterday at the home of Monsieur de Vueillerans, you let six bottles go round the table after the meal without touching any, nor did you go any lighter on glasses of water than the company did on the coastal wine. Yet this penitence has lasted the three days since my letter was written, and three days makes at least six meals. Now to the six meals observed out of loyalty, one can add six more out of fear, and six out of shame, and six out of habit, and six out of obstinacy. How many motives can prolong painful privations of which love alone would reap the glory! Would love deign to pride itself on what is not its own?

That makes more bad jokes than you told me bad words, it is time to call a halt. You are naturally serious; I have noticed that extended banter overheats you, as a long walk overheats a portly man; but I am taking on you about the same vengeance that Henry IV did on the Duke of Mayenne, and your sovereign wishes to imitate the clemency of the most excellent King.[113] In addition I would fear that after so many regrets and excuses you might ultimately turn a fault so well redeemed into a merit, and want to forget it promptly, lest if I waited too long it no longer be generosity, but ingratitude.

As for your resolution to renounce wine forever, to me it is not as heroic as you might think; intense passions give little thought to these petty sacrifices, and love does not feed on gallantry. Besides, there is sometimes more skill than courage in taking advantage for the present moment of an uncertain future, and taking advance credit for a perpetual abstinence that can be renounced at will. Oh my good friend! In all that flatters the senses does indulgence necessarily lead to abuse? Is drunkenness necessarily attached to the taste for wine, and could philosophy be vain or

cruel enough to offer no better way to make moderate use of things that please than to give them up entirely?

If you keep your commitment, you deprive yourself of an innocent pleasure, and risk your health by changing your manner of living: if you break it, love is doubly offended and even your honor suffers. I therefore invoke my rights on this occasion, and not only do I relieve you of a vow that is null, since it was made without my leave, but I even forbid you to observe it beyond the term I shall prescribe. Tuesday we shall have here the music of Milord Edward. During the collation I shall send toward you a cup half full of a pure and healthy nectar. I want it to be drunk in my presence, and in my honor, after a few drops are first offered in expiatory libation to the Graces. Next my penitent will resume in his meals the sober use of wine tempered by the crystal of springs, and as your good Plutarch says, moderating the ardors of Bacchus with the company of the Nymphs.[114]

Apropos of Tuesday's concert, did that scatterbrain Regianino[115] not put it in his head that I could already sing an Italian air and even a duet with him? He wanted me to sing it with you to bring his two pupils together; but in that duet there are certain *ben mio*'s that are dangerous to speak under a mother's eyes when the heart is involved; it is better to postpone that experiment until our first concert at the Inseparable's. I attribute the facility with which I have acquired the taste for this music to the facility my brother gave me for Italian poetry, and which I have so well maintained with you that I easily sense the cadence of the verse, and to believe Regianino, I take on the accent rather well. I begin every day by reading a few stanzas from Tasso, or a scene from Metastasio: then he has me recite and accompany some recitative, and it is as if I were continuing to speak or read, which surely would never occur with French recitative. After that I must sustain even and accurate notes in measure; an exercise which the shouts I was used to render rather difficult. Finally we go on to airs, and it turns out that the accuracy and flexibility of the voice, pathetic expression, *rinforzandi*,[116] and all the ornaments are a natural effect of the sweetness of the vocal line and the precision of the meter, so that what seemed to me most difficult to learn, has no need even to be taught. The character of the melody has such a connection with the tone of the language, and such purity of modulation, that one has only to listen to the bass[117] and know how to talk, in order easily to sight-read the vocal line. There all passions have sharp and strong expressions; quite the opposite of the unbearable drawl of French song, its own, always sweet and facile, but lively and touching, says much with little effort. Finally, I sense that this music is stirring to the soul and restful to the chest; it is precisely the music my heart and lungs require. Until Tuesday then, my gentle friend, my master, my penitent, my

apostle, alas! What are you not to me! Why should a single title be lacking among so many rights?

P. S. Did you know a nice outing on the water is being planned, like the one we took two years ago with poor Chaillot? How timid my wily master was then! How he trembled when he gave me his hand to get out of the boat! Ah the hypocrite!..... He has mightily changed.

LETTER LIII

From Julie

Thus everything frustrates our schemes, belies our expectations, betrays passions that Heaven ought to have crowned! Wanton toys of a blind fortune, sorrowful victims of a mockery of hope, shall we forever touch a fleeting pleasure and never grasp it? This wedding too vainly desired was to take place at Clarens; the bad weather works against us, it has to take place in town. We were to manage an encounter there; both of us, beset with bothersome people, are unable to get free of them at the same time, and when one of us finds a chance to steal away it is impossible for the other to join him! Finally, a favorable moment comes along, the cruellest of mothers[118] comes to snatch it away, and that instant is all but the undoing of two unfortunate lovers to whom it should have brought happiness! Far from damping my courage, so many obstacles have whetted it. I know not what new force inspires me, but I feel in myself a boldness I never had; and if you dare to share it, this evening, this very evening can fulfill my promises and pay all of love's debts all at once.

Take counsel with yourself, my friend, and see how much you cherish life; for the expedient I am proposing can lead us both to the death. If you fear it, do not finish this letter, but if the point of a sword does not frighten your heart more today than the abysses of Meillerie did formerly, mine runs the same risk and has not hesitated. Listen.

Babi, who ordinarily sleeps in my room has been ill for three days, and even though I absolutely insisted on caring for her, she has been transferred elsewhere in spite of me: but since she is better, she may perhaps return as soon as tomorrow. The place where we eat is far from the stairway that leads to my mother's rooms and mine: at the supper hour the whole house is deserted except the kitchen and dining room. And finally the night in this season is already dark at that hour, its veil can easily conceal passers-by in the street from sight, and you are perfectly familiar with the layout of the house.

This is enough to convey my meaning. Come this afternoon to my Fanchon's; I shall explain the rest to you, and give you the necessary instructions: or if I cannot I shall leave them in writing at the former depository of our letters, where, as I have indicated, you will already find this one: for the subject is too important for me to dare entrust it to anyone.

Oh how I can now see your heart pound! How I can read in it your transports, and how I share them! No, my sweet friend, no, we shall not depart this short life without having for an instant tasted of happiness. But bear in mind, however, that that moment is surrounded by the horrors of death; that the approach is subject to a thousand hazards, the site dangerous, the retreat extremely perilous; that we are done for if we are discovered, and everything must favor us if we are to avoid discovery. Let us make no mistake; I know my father too well to doubt that I would see your heart instantly pierced by his hand, if indeed he did not pierce mine first; for surely I would not be spared, and do you believe I would expose you to that risk if I were not certain to share it?

Also reflect that there can be no question of relying on your courage; you must not even think of it, and moreover I very expressly forbid you to bring any arm for your defense, not even your sword: in any case it would be perfectly useless; for if we are caught, my design is to throw myself into your arms, to wrap you tightly in mine, and thus receive the fatal blow so as never again to be separated from you, happier in my death than I ever was in life.

I hope a sweeter fate is reserved for us; I feel at least, that it is due us, and fortune will tire of being unjust to us. Come then, soul of my heart, life of my life, come be reunited with yourself. Come under the auspices of tender love, to receive the prize for your obedience and sacrifices. Come and admit, even in the midst of pleasures, that it is from the union of hearts that they derive their greatest charm.

LETTER LIV

To Julie

I arrive full of an emotion that grows as I enter this haven. Julie! Here I am in your dressing room, here I am in the sanctuary of all my heart worships. The torch of love guided my steps, and I have passed through without being seen. Enchanting place, fortunate place, where once so many tender looks were repressed, so many burning sighs stifled; thou who didst see my first flame arise and grow; for the second time thou shalt see it crowned; witness to my undying constancy, be now witness to my

happiness, and veil forever the pleasures of the most faithful and happiest of men.

How enchanting is this mysterious abode? Everything here flatters and feeds the ardor that devours me. O Julie! It is filled with you, and the flame of my desire spreads to your every vestige. Aye, all my senses are intoxicated at once. Some almost imperceptible fragrance, sweeter than the rose, and lighter than the iris is breathed forth from all over this place. I fancy I hear the flattering sound of your voice. All the scattered pieces of your raiment present to my ardent imagination those of your person which they secrete. This light bonnet which is graced by long blond hair it affects to cover: this happy neckerchief of which at least once I shall not have to complain; this elegant and simple dishabille which so well states the taste of her who wears it; these dainty slippers which fit easily on your lithe feet; this slender corset which touches and enfolds..... what an enchanting shape..... two slight curves in front..... oh voluptuous spectacle.... the whalebone has yielded to the form pressed into it..... delightful imprints, let me kiss you a thousand times!.... Ye gods! ye gods! What will it be when..... ah, I think I already feel that tender heart beating under a happy hand! Julie! my charming Julie! I see you, I feel you everywhere, I breathe you with the air you have breathed; you permeate my whole substance; how your abode is burning and painful for me! It is terrible on my impatience. Oh come, fly to me, or I shall die.

How fortunate to have found ink and paper! I express what I feel to temper its excess, I hold my transports in abeyance by describing them.

I think I hear a noise. Might it be your heartless father? I do not think myself cowardly..... but at this moment how horrible death would be! My despair would be equal to the flame that consumes me. Heaven! I ask of thee but one more hour to live and abandon the rest of my existence to thy vengeance. O desires! O fear! O cruel throbbings!.... Someone is opening the door!.... someone is entering!..... it is she! It is she! I can glimpse her, I have seen her, I can hear her closing the door. My heart, my weak heart, thou succumbest at such turbulence. Ah, find the strength to bear the felicity that overwhelms thee![119]

LETTER LV

To Julie

Oh let us die, my sweet Friend! let us die, well beloved of my heart! What use can we make from now on of an insipid youth of which we have exhausted all the delights? Explain to me, if you can, what I have felt dur-

ing this inconceivable night; give me a notion of a life spent thus, or let me depart this one which has nothing left of what I have just experienced with you. I had tasted pleasure, and thought I could conceive happiness. Ah, I had felt but an empty dream and imagined but the happiness of a child! My senses deceived my coarse soul; only in them I was seeking supreme happiness, and I have found that their exhausted pleasures were but the beginning of mine. O unique masterpiece of nature! Divine Julie! Delightful possession for which all the transports of the most ardent love scarcely suffice! No, it is not those transports I miss the most: ah no, take away, if you must, these intoxicating favors for which I would give a thousand lives; but give me back everything that was not they, and outshone them a thousand times. Give me back that intimate union of souls, that you told me to expect and made me taste so. Give me back that gentle fatigue filled with the effusions of our hearts; give me back that enchanting sleep found on your breast; give me back that still more delightful awakening, and those halting sighs, and those sweet tears, and those kisses whose voluptuous languor we slowly savored, and those tender moans, during which you pressed against yours this heart made to unite with it.

Tell me, Julie, you who can from your own sensibility gauge others' so well, do you think what I felt before was truly love? My sentiments, doubt it not, have changed in nature since yesterday; they have somehow acquired a less impetuous, but sweeter, tenderer, and more enchanting character. Do you remember that full hour we spent talking calmly about our love and that dark and fearful future, through which the present was yet more sensible to us; that hour, alas, too short, whose exchanges were rendered so touching by a faint impression of sadness? I was tranquil, and yet I was beside you; I worshipped you and desired nothing. I did not even imagine another felicity, than to feel your face near mine like that, your breath on my cheek, and your arm around my neck. What calm in all my senses! What pure, continual, universal voluptuousness! The enchantment of ecstasy was in the soul; it never left it; it went on and on. What a difference between the frenzies of love and such a peaceful situation! This is the first time in my days I have experienced that by your side; and yet, imagine the strange change I am experiencing; this is of all the hours of my life, the one dearest to me, and the only one I would have wished to prolong eternally.* Julie, tell me then whether I didn't love you at all previously, or whether I no longer do?

No longer love you? What a doubt! Have I then ceased to exist, and is

* Too easy woman, would you like to know whether you are loved? Study your lover when he leaves your arms. O love! If I long for the days when one savors thee, it is not for the hour of ecstasy; it is for the hour that follows it.

my life not more in your heart than in mine? I feel, I feel that you are a thousand times dearer to me than ever, and I have found new strength in my fatigue to cherish you more tenderly yet. I have acquired more peaceful sentiments for you, it is true, but more affectionate and more varied; without weakening they have multiplied; the gentle pleasures of friendship temper the throes of love, and I scarce imagine any sort of attachment that would not unite me with you. O my enchanting mistress, O my wife, my sister, my sweet friend! How little I shall have said for what I feel, even after exhausting all the dearest names in the heart of man!

I must admit to you a suspicion I have conceived in self-shame and mortification; it is that you are better able to love than I. Yes, my Julie, it is truly you who make my life and my essence; I indeed worship you with all the faculties of my soul; but yours is more loving, more permeated with love; one sees that, one feels it; it is love that animates your graces, that reigns in your speech, that gives your eyes their penetrating softness, your voice such touching sounds; it is love that by your presence alone communicates to other hearts unbeknownst to them the tender emotion of your own. How far I am from that enchanting state that suffices to itself! I seek ecstasy, and you seek love; I have transports and you passion; all my throes do not equal your delightful languor, and the sentiment that sustains your heart is the only supreme felicity. Yesterday was the first time I have tasted that delight so pure. You have left me something of the inconceivable spell that is in you, and I believe that with your sweet breath you breathed into me a new soul. Hasten, I beg you, to complete what you have done. Take from mine all that remains and put your own completely in its place. No, angelic beauty, celestial soul; only sentiments like yours can honor your charms. You alone are worthy to inspire a perfect love, you alone are able to feel it. Ah give me your heart, my Julie, to love you as you deserve!

LETTER LVI

From Claire to Julie

I have, my dear Cousin, a notice of import for you. Last evening your friend had an altercation with Milord Edward that can become serious. Here is what I learned about it from Monsieur d'Orbe who was present, and who, uneasy about the consequences of this affair, came this morning to apprise me of it.

They had both supped at Milord's, and after an hour or two of music they started to chat and drink punch. Your friend drank only a single glass mixed with water; the other two were not so temperate, and although

Monsieur d'Orbe does not admit to having got himself drunk, I reserve my opinion for him about that for another time. The conversation fell naturally on the subject of you; for you are not unaware that Milord can talk of nothing else but you. Your friend, who dislikes such indiscretions, reacted in such a discourteous way that finally Edward, overheated with punch and piqued by such curtness, dared to say in complaining of your coldness that it was not as general as might be believed and that a certain person who was saying nothing was not treated as badly as he. Instantly your friend, whose petulance you know, responded to this remark with an insulting anger provoking the other to give him the lie,[120] and they leapt to their swords. Bomston half drunk sprained his ankle as he was running and was forced to sit down. His leg swelled up right away, and that calmed the quarrel better than all the pains taken by Monsieur d'Orbe. But since he was attentive to what was going on, he saw your friend approach Milord Edward's ear as he left, and he heard him telling him in a half-whisper: *As soon as you are able to be about, send me news of yourself, or I shall inquire after you. Do not take the trouble*, Edward said to him with a mocking smile, *you shall know soon enough. We shall see*, your friend replied coldly, and he left. Monsieur d'Orbe will explain it all to you in greater detail when he gives you this letter. It is up to your prudence to suggest means of stifling this unfortunate affair, or prescribe what I on my side must do to assist. In the meanwhile the bearer is at your disposal; he will do whatever you order him to do, and you may depend on secrecy.

You are in deep trouble, my dear, my friendship must tell you that. Your involvement with this man cannot long remain hidden in a small town like this one, and it is a miracle of luck that in the two years since it began you have not yet become the subject of public commentary.[121] You shall soon if you don't take care; you already would be, if you were less beloved; but there is such a general disinclination to speak ill of you, that doing so is a bad way to be well received, and a very sure one to be hated. Yet everything comes to an end; I greatly fear that the secrecy is ending for your love, and there is good reason to believe that Milord Edward got his suspicions from some slanderous remarks he may have overheard. Give it some thought, my dear child. The Nightwatch said some time back that he saw your friend leave your house at five o'clock in the morning. Fortunately the latter was one of the first to learn about it, hurried to this man's house and found the means to keep him quiet; but what is such silence, if not a way to accredit rumors that are being whispered about? Your mother's suspicions increase daily; you know how many times she has given you to understand as much. She has mentioned it to me in turn in a rather stern manner, and if she did not fear your father's violence, there is

no doubt she would already have mentioned it to him; but she dares all the less do so since he will always blame her in particular for an acquaintance you acquired through her.

I cannot repeat too often: look out for yourself while there is still time. Send your friend away before there is talk; forestall incipient suspicions that his absence will surely dispel; for after all what can people think he is doing here? Perhaps in six weeks, in a month it will be too late. If the least word reached your father's ears, tremble at what would result from the indignation of an old officer infatuated with his house's honor, and from the petulance of a fiery young man who cannot endure anything: but you must begin by resolving in one way or another the affair with Milord Edward; for you would only irritate your friend, and provoke a just refusal, if you brought up his departure before that matter has been put to rest.

LETTER LVII

From Julie

My friend, I have informed myself carefully about what has taken place between you and Milord Edward. It is on the basis of an exact knowledge of the facts that your friend wants to examine with you how you must conduct yourself on this occasion in accordance with the sentiments you profess, and of which I suppose you do not make a vain and false pretense.

I do not inquire whether you are versed in the art of fencing, nor whether you believe you are able to stand up to a man who has a reputation all over Europe for superior handling of weapons, and who having duelled five or six times in his life has always killed, wounded, or disarmed his man. I understand that in your present case, one consults not one's skill but one's courage, and the best means of avenging oneself of a bully who insults you is to arrange for him to kill you. Let us pass over such a judicious maxim; you will tell me that your honor and mine are dearer to you than life. That is therefore the principle upon which we must reason.

Let us begin with what concerns you. Could you ever tell me in what way you are personally offended by a remark that related solely to me? Whether on this occasion you should have taken up the cause for me, we shall see presently: in the meantime, you could hardly deny that the quarrel is perfectly foreign to your particular honor, unless you take as an affront the suspicion that you are loved by me. You have been slandered, I agree: but after starting it yourself with an atrocious insult; and I who come from a military family, and who have heard these horrible questions debated so often, am not unaware that one outrage in response to another

does not cancel it, and that the first person insulted remains the sole person offended; it is the same case as unforeseen combat, where the aggressor is the sole criminal, and he who kills or wounds in self-defense is not guilty of murder.

Now let us come to me; let us allow that I was offended by Milord Edward's remark, although he did me nothing but justice. Do you know what you are doing in defending me with such heat and indiscretion? You compound his slander; you prove he was right; you sacrifice my honor to a false point of honor; you defame your mistress in order to acquire at best the reputation of able swordsman. Pray tell me what connection there is between your way of justifying me and my real justification? Do you think taking up my cause with such eagerness is significant evidence that there is no liaison between us, and that it suffices to make clear that you are brave, to show that you are not my lover? Be sure that all Milord Edward's comments are less prejudicial to me than your behavior; it is you alone who with this scandal are making it your business to publish and confirm them. He may well, for his part, evade your sword in combat, but never will my reputation nor my life, perhaps, evade the deadly blow you deal them.

There you have reasons solid enough so that you can have none equally so to respond to them; but you will, I can foresee, combat reason with custom; you will tell me that there are fatalities that draw us in despite ourselves; that in whatever case, to be given the lie is never tolerated; and that when an affair has taken a certain turn, one can no longer avoid fighting or being dishonored. Let us examine that as well.

Do you remember a distinction you made to me once on an important occasion, between real and apparent honor? In which of these two categories shall we put the one today at issue? For my part, I do not see how there can even be any question. What does the glory of slitting a man's throat have in common with the assurance of moral rectitude, and what purchase can the vain opinion of others have on genuine honor, the roots of which all lie deep in the heart? How is this! Do the virtues one really possesses perish beneath the lies of a slanderer? Do the insults of a drunk man prove they are deserved, and is the honor of the sage at the mercy of the first brute he might encounter? Will you tell me that a duel gives evidence that one is courageous, and that that is enough to erase the shame or the reproach of all the other vices? I will ask you what honor can dictate such a decision, and what reason justify it? By this criterion a knave has only to duel to cease being a knave; the utterances of a liar become truths, as soon as they are maintained at sword point, and if you were accused of killing a man, you would go kill a second to prove it isn't true? Thus virtue, vice, honor, infamy, truth, falsehood, can all derive their essence from the

outcome of a duel; a fencing school is the seat of all justice; there is no other right than force, no other vindication than murder; all the reparation owed to those one offends is to kill them, and any offense is washed equally well in the blood of the offender or the offended? Tell me, if wolves could reason would they have maxims different from those? Judge for yourself by your own case whether I am exaggerating their absurdity. What is at stake here for you? To have been given the lie in a situation where you were in fact lying. Do you think you can kill truth along with the person you want to punish for having uttered it? Do you realize that in submitting to the outcome of a duel, you call Heaven to witness to a falsehood, and dare to say to the arbiter of combats[122]: come to the support of the unjust cause, and grant victory to untruth? Does nothing about this blasphemy terrify you? Does nothing about this absurdity revolt you? Oh God! What is this wretched honor that fears not vice but blame, and does not allow you to suffer another to give you the lie received in advance from your own heart?

You who would have everyone take personal profit from his readings, profit then from yours, and try to think whether a single challenge was seen on the earth when it abounded in Heroes? Did the most valiant men of antiquity ever consider avenging their personal affronts in single combat? Did Caesar send a challenge to Cato, or Pompey to Caesar, for so many reciprocal affronts, and was the greatest captain of Greece dishonored for letting himself be threatened with a staff?[123] Different times, different customs,[124] I know that; but are there good ones only, and may not one presume to question whether the customs of one time are those that strict honor demands? No, that kind of honor is not variable, it depends not on time nor place nor prejudice, it can neither pass nor be reborn, its timeless source lies in the heart of the just man and the inalterable rule of his duties. If the most enlightened Peoples, the bravest, the most virtuous on earth, have not known the duel, I say that it is not an institution of honor, but a horrid and barbarous fashion worthy of its ferocious origin. It remains to be seen whether, when his own life or another's is at stake, an honorable man models himself on fashion, and whether there is not then more courage in defying it than following it? What would the man be, in your opinion, who wished to submit to it in places governed by a contrary custom? In Messina or Naples, he would go await his man at a street corner and stab him in the back. That is what is called being brave[125] in those countries, and honor there consists not in getting yourself killed by your enemy, but in killing him.

Take care then not to confuse the sacred name of honor with that ferocious prejudice that puts all virtues to the point of a sword, and serves only to make for brave blackguards. Even if this method could serve if you wish

as a supplement to probity, wherever probity prevails is its supplement not useless, and what should we think of the man who exposes himself to die in order to exempt himself from being an honorable man? Do you not see that the crimes that shame and honor have not prevented are covered and multiplied by false shame and fear of blame? It is this method that makes man a hypocrite and a liar; that makes him spill the blood of a friend for an indiscreet word he ought to forget, for a reproach he deserves but cannot bear. It is what transforms an abused and fearful girl into an infernal fury. It is what can arm the mother's hand, O powerful God! against the tender fruit..... I feel my soul falter at this horrible thought, and give thanks at least to him who searches hearts for having removed from mine that horrible honor that inspires nothing but crimes and makes nature shudder.

Examine yourself carefully therefore and consider whether you have the right to attack a man's life with malice aforethought and to expose your own to satisfy a barbarous and dangerous absurdity that has no rational foundation, and whether the sad memory of blood spilt on an occasion like this can cease crying for vengeance deep in the heart of him who spilt it? Do you know any crime equal to willful homicide, and if the basis of all virtues is humanity, what shall we think of the bloodthirsty and depraved man who dares to attack it in the life of his peer? Do you recall what you yourself said to me against foreign service, have you forgotten that the citizen owes his life to the fatherland and has not the right to dispose of it without leave of the laws, all the more so when they forbid it? O my friend! If you sincerely love virtue, learn to serve her in her way, and not in men's ways. I allow that some disadvantage may result from it: is this word virtue then but an empty name for you, and will you be virtuous only when it costs nothing to do so?

But what ultimately are these disadvantages? The grumbles of the idle, the wicked, who seek entertainment in others' misfortunes and would always like to have some new story to tell. Now there is a fine motivation for wanting to cut each other's throats! If the philosopher and the sage model themselves in the greatest affairs of life on the insane utterances of the multitude, what good is that whole parade of studying, only to end up a vulgar man? So you dare not sacrifice resentment to duty, esteem, friendship, lest you be accused of fearing death? Weigh these things, my good friend, and you will find far more cowardice in the fear of that reproach than in the fear of death itself. The swaggerer, the poltroon wants at all costs to pass for brave;

> *Ma verace valor, benché negletto,*
> *È di se stesso a sé fregio assai chiaro.*[126]
>
> But true valor, although neglected,
> is alone sufficient ornament to itself.

He who pretends to face death without fright, lies. Every man fears death; that is the great law of sensible beings, without which every mortal species would soon be destroyed. This fear is a simple natural instinct, not only indifferent but good in itself and in keeping with order. The only thing that makes it shameful and wrong is that it can keep us from doing good and fulfilling our duties. If cowardice were never an obstacle to virtue, it would cease to be a vice. Whoever is more attached to his life than to his duty can hardly be solidly virtuous, on that I agree. But explain to me, you who have pretensions to reason, what kind of merit one can find in braving death to commit a crime?

Even if it were true that one incurs contempt by refusing to fight, which contempt is the more to be feared, that of others by doing right, or one's own by doing wrong? Depend upon it, he who truly respects himself is little sensible to the unjust contempt of others, and fears only being worthy of it: for the good and the honest do not depend on men's judgment, but on the nature of things, and were the entire world to approve the action you are about to take, it would not be the less ignominious. But it is false that by abstaining for virtue's sake one incurs contempt. The upright man whose whole life is without blot and who never gave any sign of cowardice will refuse to sully his hand with homicide and will only be the more honored for it. Always ready to serve his fatherland, to protect the weak, to fulfill the most dangerous duties, and to defend in every just and honest encounter what he cherishes at the price of his blood, he displays in his action that unshakable fortitude which one does not have without true courage. In the security of his conscience, he walks with his head held high, he neither flees nor seeks out his enemy. It can easily be seen that he fears death less than wrongdoing, and dreads crime and not peril. If vile prejudices arise an instant against him, every day of his honorable life is one more witness to refute them, and in a conduct so consistent one action is judged in context with all the others.

But do you know what makes this moderation so painful to a common man? It is the difficulty of maintaining it with dignity. It is in addition the necessity of committing afterward no blameworthy action: for if the fear of wrongdoing does not hold him back in this last instance, why would it have in the other where one could suppose a more natural motive? It is then clear that this refusal arises not from virtue but from cowardice, and a scruple that arises only in peril is mocked with good reason. Have you not remarked that men who are so irascible and quick to challenge others are, for the most part, very dishonorable men who, lest the contempt felt for them be openly displayed, attempt to cover over the infamy of their entire lives with a few affairs of honor? Is it for you to imitate such men? Again

let us set aside the professional military who sell their blood for a price; who, wishing to preserve their position, calculate what they owe to their honor in terms of their self-interest, and know within one *écu* what their life is worth. My friend, let all those people fight. Nothing is less honorable than this honor they make such a fuss about; it is just an insane fashion, a false imitation of virtue that decks itself in the greatest crimes. The honor of a man like you lies not within another's power, it lies in itself and not in the opinion of the populace; it is defended by neither sword nor shield, but by an upright and irreproachable life, and that combat is just as good as the other as far as courage is concerned.

It is by these principles that you should reconcile the praise I have given in all times to genuine valor with the contempt I ever felt for supposedly brave men. I love men of heart[127] and cannot abide cowards; I would break with a poltroon lover whose fear would make him flee danger, and I, like all women, think that the fire of courage inspires that of love. But my desire is that valor show itself in legitimate situations, and that one not hasten to make a vain show of it mistakenly, as if fearing one would not find it again when it is needed. There are those who make a single effort and show up a single time to earn the right to hide for the rest of their lives. True courage shows more constancy and less urgency; it is always what it must be; it needs to be neither excited nor restrained: the man of honor carries it everywhere with him; to the battle against the enemy; in society in favor of truth and of those who are absent: in his own bed against the attacks of suffering and death. The strength of soul that inspires it is customary throughout history; it always places virtue above events, and consists not in fighting, but in fearing nothing. Such, my friend, is the sort of courage I have often praised, and that it pleases me to find in you. All the rest is nothing but thoughtlessness, extravagance, ferocity; it is cowardice to submit to it, and I have no less scorn for him who aspires to needless peril than for him who flees a peril he must face.

I have shown you, if I be not mistaken, that in your quarrel with Milord Edward your honor is not at stake; that you compromise mine in having recourse to means of weapons; that this means is neither just, nor reasonable, nor admissible; that it cannot accord with the sentiments you profess; that it suits none but dishonest men who use bravura as a substitute for virtues they do not have, or Officers who fight not for honor but for their own interest; that there is more true courage in disdaining than adopting it; that the disadvantages to which one is exposed in rejecting it are inseparable from the practice of true duties and more apparent than real; finally that the men who are the most eager to have recourse to it are always those whose probity is the most suspect. Whence I conclude that

there is no way you could in this situation either issue or accept a challenge, without at the same time renouncing reason, virtue, honor, and me. Turn my reasonings on their head as you will, heap up on your account sophism upon sophism; it will always emerge that a man of courage is not a coward, and a man of honor cannot be a man without honor. Now I have demonstrated, I believe, that the man of courage eschews the duel, and the man of honor abhors it.

I believed, my friend, that in so serious a matter, I should let reason alone speak, and present things to you exactly as they are. If I had wished to depict them as I see them, and give voice to sentiment and humanity, I should have used a quite different language. You know that my father in his youth had the misfortune of killing a man in a duel; this man was his friend; they fought reluctantly, the insane point of honor forced them to it. The fatal blow that took the one's life took away forever the other's peace of mind. His heart has never since that time been free from sorrow and remorse; often when he is alone he is heard to weep and sigh; he can still feel the steel thrust by his own cruel hand into his friend's heart; in the shadow of night he sees his pale and bleeding body; shuddering, he stares at the fatal wound; he would stanch the blood that flows; horror seizes him, he cries out, this awful corpse never ceases to pursue him. In the five years since he lost the cherished bearer of his name and hope of his family, he has blamed himself for his death as a just punishment from Heaven, which avenged on his only son the unfortunate father whom he deprived of his.

I admit to you: all this in combination with my natural aversion for cruelty inspires in me such a horror of duels that I regard them as the ultimate degree of brutality men can achieve. He who goes out to fight with a light heart is in my eyes but a ferocious beast attempting to tear another to pieces, and if they have the slightest natural sentiment left in their souls, to me the one who perishes is less pitiable than the victor. Examine these men accustomed to blood: they brave remorse only by stifling the voice of nature; they gradually become cruel, insensible; they make light of others' lives, and the punishment for having lacked humanity is ultimately to lose it entirely. What do they do in this state? Answer me, do you want to become like them? No, you are not made for that odious bestialization; dread the first step that can lead you to it: your soul is still innocent and sane; do not begin to deprave it at the risk of your life, through an action without virtue, a crime without pleasure, and a point of honor without reason.[128]

I have said nothing to you about your Julie; she will benefit, no doubt, by letting your heart speak. One word, a single word, and I shall abandon you to it. You once honored me with the tender name of spouse: perhaps

at this time am I to bear that of mother. Do you mean to leave me a widow before a holy bond can join us?

P. S. I am invoking in this letter an authority no wise man ever resisted. If you refuse to yield to it, I have nothing more to say to you; but think well on it beforehand. Take a week of reflection to ponder this important subject. It is not in the name of reason I ask this delay, but in mine. Remember that on this occasion I am making use of the right you have yourself given me and that it extends at least that far.

LETTER LVIII

From Julie to Milord Edward

It is not to make any complaint concerning you, Milord, that I write: since you slander me, I must surely have wronged you in ways of which I am unaware. How is it conceivable that an honorable man should wish to dishonor for no reason a family worthy of respect? Satisfy your vengeance then, if you believe it legitimate. This letter offers you an easy means of undoing an unfortunate maiden who can never be consoled for having offended you, and places at your discretion the honor you mean to deprive her of. Yes, Milord, your imputations were correct, I have a lover who is loved; he is the master of my heart and my person; death alone can break so sweet a bond. This lover is the very person you used to honor with your friendship; he is worthy of it, since he loves you and is virtuous. Yet he is about to perish by your hand; I know that honor insulted demands blood; I know that his very valor will doom him; I know that in an encounter hardly threatening to you, his intrepid heart will fearlessly go seeking the fatal blow. I have tried to rein in that mindless zeal; I have let reason speak. Alas! While writing my letter I could sense its futility, and whatever respect I have for his virtues, I do not expect them to be sufficiently sublime to detach him from a false point of honor. Feast in advance on the pleasure you will take in piercing your friend's breast: but know, heartless man, that at least you will not have the pleasure of feasting on my tears and witnessing my despair. No, I swear by the love that grieves in my heart; attest an oath which shall not be vain: I will not survive by one day him for whom I breathe, and you shall have the glory of sending to the grave with one blow two unfortunate lovers, who had done you no willful wrong, and whose pleasure it was to honor you.

It is said, Milord, that you have a beautiful soul and a sensible heart. If they permit you the peaceful enjoyment of a vengeance I cannot under-

stand and the satisfaction of making people miserable, may they, when I shall be no more, inspire in you some attentions for an inconsolable father and mother, whom the loss of their only remaining child will condemn to endless grief.

LETTER LIX

From Monsieur d'Orbe to Julie

I hasten, Mademoiselle, following your orders, to give you an account of the mission with which you charged me. I have just come from Milord Edward whom I found still suffering from his sprain, and unable to walk in his room without the use of a walking stick. I handed him your letter which he eagerly opened; he seemed moved to me as he read it: he pondered some time, then he read it over again with even more sensible agitation. Here is what he said to me when he finished. *You know, Monsieur, that affairs of honor have their rules to which one cannot make exception: you have seen what transpired in this instance; it must be discharged in keeping with the rules. Find two friends, and take the trouble to return here tomorrow morning with them; you shall then learn my resolution*. I put forward to him the argument that the affair having taken place amongst us, it would be best to terminate it that way. *I know what is appropriate*, he said to me curtly, *and shall do what must be done. Bring your two friends, or I have nothing more to say to you*. Thereupon I left, wondering futilely in my mind what his strange design can be; however that may be I shall have the honor of seeing you this evening, and I shall execute tomorrow whatever you prescribe. If you deem it appropriate for me to keep the appointment along with my attendants, I shall choose them among people of whom I am sure come what may.

LETTER LX

To Julie

Calm your alarms, tender and dear Julie, and upon the relation of what has just taken place learn and share the sentiments I feel.

I was so filled with indignation upon receiving your Letter, that I was scarcely able to read it with the attention it deserved. It mattered little that I could not refute it: blind anger had the upper hand. You may be right, I said to myself, but do not ever suggest to me that I allow you to be reviled. Were I to lose you and die guilty, I will not suffer anyone to fail in the re-

spect due you, and so long as I still have a breath of life, you shall be honored by all who approach you as you are in my heart. I did not hesitate however with regard to the week you requested; Milord Edward's accident and my vow of obedience combined to make this delay unavoidable. Determined, in keeping with your orders, to make use of this interval to ponder the subject of your letter, I spent my time rereading and reflecting endlessly upon it, not to change my sentiment, but to justify it.

This morning I had again picked up that letter too wise and too judicious for my taste, and was rereading it anxiously when there came a knock at the door of my room. A moment later, I saw Milord Edward enter without a sword, leaning on a cane; three persons followed him, among whom I recognized Monsieur d'Orbe. Surprised by this unexpected visit, I waited in silence to see what it was to bring forth, when Edward begged me to grant him a moment's audience, and to let him act and speak without being interrupted. I want your word for it, he said; the presence of these gentlemen, who are friends of yours should assure that you are not committing it indiscreetly. I promised without hesitation; hardly had I finished than I was astonished, as you can imagine, to see Milord Edward on his knees before me. Surprised by such a strange posture, I at once tried to make him rise; but after reminding me of my promise, he spoke to me in these terms: "I come, Monsieur, to retract formally the abusive remarks drunkenness caused me to utter in your presence: their injustice makes them more offensive to me than to you, and I owe myself a formal disavowal of them. I submit to whatever punishment you may wish to impose, and will not consider my honor restored until my fault is repaired. Whatever the price, grant me the forgiveness I ask of you, and restore me your friendship."[129] Milord, said I straightaway, I now recognize your grand and generous soul; and I can surely distinguish between remarks dictated by the heart and those you utter when you are not yourself; may they be forever forgotten. I immediately helped him up, and we embraced. After this Milord turning toward the observers, said to them: *Messieurs, I thank you for your forbearance. Worthy men like you*, he added with a proud air and trembling voice, *sense that he who thus rights his wrongs will suffer wrongs from no one. You may publish what you have seen*. Then he invited all four of us to supper this evening, and those Gentlemen departed.

We were no sooner alone than he returned to embrace me in a more tender and friendly manner; then taking my hand and sitting down beside me: Happy mortal, he exclaimed, savor a happiness you deserve. Julie's heart belongs to you; may you both..... What are you saying, Milord? I interrupted; are you losing your senses? No, he said to me with a smile,

2. The heroism of valor.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

but I very nearly did, and I was done for, perhaps, if she who deprived me of my reason had not restored it to me. Then he handed me a letter which I was taken aback to find written by a hand that never wrote to any man* but me. What emotions did I feel in reading it! I saw an incomparable lover willing to damn herself to save me, and I could recognize Julie. But when I came to the spot where she swears never to survive the most fortunate of men, I shuddered at the dangers I had incurred, I complained of being too much loved, and my fright made me aware that you are merely a mortal. Ah give me back the courage you deprive me of; I had enough to brave a death that threatened me alone, I have none to die altogether.[130]

While my soul was abandoning itself to these bitter reflections, Edward was going on about things to which at first I paid little mind; yet he caught my attention by speaking constantly of you; for what he was saying about you pleased my heart and no longer provoked my jealousy. He seemed to me deeply regretful to have troubled our flame and your peace of mind; you are what he honors most in the world, and not daring to bring to you the apologies he made, he begged me to receive them in your name and get you to accept them. I have looked on you, he said, as her representative, and could not humiliate myself enough before the object of her love, not being able without compromising her to address her in person or even name her. He admits having conceived for you the sentiments one cannot help feeling when too much in your presence; but it was tender admiration rather than love. These sentiments never inspired in him either pretensions or hope; he sacrificed them all to ours the instant they became known to him, and the ugly remark that escaped him was the effect of the punch and not of jealousy. He treats love as a philosopher who believes his soul is above passions: for my part, I am mistaken if he has not already known one that no longer allows others to implant themselves. He is mistaking exhaustion of the heart for an effort of reason, and I know well that to love Julie and give her up is not within a man's power.

He desired to learn in detail the story of our love, and the reasons that oppose your friend's happiness; I believed that after your letter a half-confidence was dangerous and inappropriate; I made it entire, and he listened to me with an attentiveness that attested his sincerity. I more than once saw his eyes moisten and his soul stirred; above all I noticed the powerful impression that all the triumphs of virtue made on his soul, and I think I have acquired a new protector for Claude Anet who will be no less zealous than your father. There are, he said, neither accidents nor adventures in what you have told me, and yet the catastrophes in a Novel would absorb

* We must, I think, except her father.

me much less; so much do sentiments complement situations, and honest dealings outstanding deeds. Your two souls are so extraordinary that they cannot be judged by common rules; for you happiness neither lies along the same road nor is it of the same kind as that of other men; they seek only power and the admiration of others, you require only tenderness and peace. To your love was joined a process of virtuous emulation that raises you up, and each of you would be lesser if you had not loved each other. Love will pass, he dared to add (forgive him this blasphemy uttered in the ignorance of his heart). Love will pass, he said, and virtues will remain. Ah, may they last as long as it does, my Julie! Heaven will demand no more than that.

In short, I see that philosophical and national severity does not pervert natural humanity in this honest Englishman, and that he takes a genuine interest in our woes. If credit and wealth could help us, I believe we would have reason to count on him. But alas! what can power and money do to make hearts happy?

This conversation, during which we were not counting the hours, brought us up to dinner time; I sent for a chicken, and after dinner we continued chatting.[131] He spoke to me of his deed of this morning, and I could hardly keep from expressing some surprise at such a public and immoderate gesture: but, beyond the reason he had already given me, he added that partial satisfaction[132] was unworthy of a man of courage; that one had to have it full or nil, for fear of abasing oneself without obtaining any reparation, and seeing a deed accomplished ungraciously and against one's will attributed to fear. Besides, he added, my reputation is made; I can be just without being suspected of cowardice; but you who are young and starting out in the world must come out of your first affair so clean that it will tempt no one to involve you in a second. There are plenty of clever poltroons who, as the saying goes, try to feel out their man; in other words, to discover someone who is even more poltroon than they, and at whose expense they can look good. I want to spare a man of honor like you the necessity of chastising one of those people without glory, and I prefer, if they need a lesson that they receive it from me rather than you; for one more affair takes nothing away from him who has already had several: but having one is always a sort of blot, and Julie's lover must be free of blots.

Such was in brief my long conversation with Milord Edward. I thought it necessary to give you an account of it so you can prescribe the manner in which I must behave with him.

Now that you must be reassured, banish I beg you, the baleful ideas that have been besetting you these last few days. Be mindful of the precau-

tions you should take in the uncertainty of your present condition. Oh if only you could soon treble my existence! If only a beloved token..... Expectation already too often disappointed, wouldst thou deceive me anew?.... O yearnings! O fear! O uncertainties! Charming friend of my heart, let us live to love each other, and let Heaven take care of the rest.

P. S. I forgot to tell you that Milord has placed your letter in my hands, and I made no objection to taking it, not judging that such a trust should remain in a third party's hands. I shall return it to you at our first interview; for as for me, I have no more use for it. It is too well written in the depths of my heart for me ever to need to reread it.

LETTER LXI

From Julie

Bring Milord Edward tomorrow so I can throw myself at his feet as he did at yours. What magnanimity! What generosity! Oh how little we are beside him! Preserve this precious friend like the apple of your eye. Perhaps he would be less worthy if he were more temperate[133]; did ever a man without flaws have great virtues?

A thousand kinds of anguish had laid me low; your letter came to revive my spent courage. By dissipating my terrors it made my burdens more bearable. I feel strong enough now to suffer. You live; you love me, your blood, the blood of your friend have not been shed and your honor is secure: therefore I am not altogether miserable.

Do not miss tomorrow's appointment. Never did I have such need to see you, nor so little hope of seeing you for long. Farewell, my dear and only friend. You did not put it correctly, it seems to me: let us live to love each other. Ah! you should have said: let us love each other to live.

LETTER LXII

From Claire to Julie

Shall I always, gentle Cousin, have to perform for you only the saddest duties of friendship? Must I always in the bitterness of my heart afflict yours with cruel news? Alas! All our sentiments are common to both of us, you know it full well and I could never tell you of new woes without having already felt them myself. Would I could conceal your misfortune with-

out increasing it! Oh would that tender friendship had as many charms as love! Ah! How quickly I would erase all the sorrows I give you!

Yesterday after the concert, your mother having left on the arm of your friend, and you on Monsieur d'Orbe's, our two fathers remained with Milord to talk politics; a subject with which I am so exasperated that boredom drove me to my room. A half-hour later, I heard your friend's name mentioned several times quite vehemently: I realized that the topic of conversation had changed and I lent my ear. I judged by what followed that Edward had dared propose a marriage between you and your friend, whom he pointedly called his own, in consideration of which he offered to make him a suitable endowment. Your father had rejected this proposition with contempt, and thereupon the exchange began to heat up. Do know, Milord was saying to him, despite your prejudices, that he is of all men the most worthy of her and perhaps the most likely to make her happy. All the gifts that cannot be acquired by men, he has received from nature, and he has added to them all the talents he could acquire on his own. He is young, tall, handsome, robust, clever; he has education, good sense, morals, courage; he has a polished mind, a sound soul, what then does he lack to merit your consent? Fortune? He shall have it. The third of my fortune is enough to make him the richest individual in the Pays de Vaud, I will if necessary give up to half. Nobility? A vain prerogative in a country where it is more harmful than useful.[134] Yet that he has too, doubt it not, not written with ink on old parchments, but engraved deep in his heart in ineradicable characters.[135] In a word, if you prefer reason to prejudice, and if you love your daughter better than your titles, it is to him you will give her.

Thereupon your father completely lost his composure. He called the proposition absurd and ridiculous. What! Milord, he said, can a man of honor like you even think that the last scion of an illustrious family would go extinguish or degrade his name in that of a homeless Nobody, reduced to living off charity?..... Halt, Edward interrupted, you are speaking of my friend, be aware that I take as my own any affronts made to him in my presence,[136] and that names injurious to a man of honor are even more so to him who utters them. Such nobodies are more respectable than all the petty Squires of Europe,[137] and I defy you to find any more honorable means of attaining fortune than the tribute of esteem and the gifts of friendship. If the Son-in-law I propose to you does not, like yourself, count a long line of always dubious forefathers, he will be the founder and the honor of his house as your first ancestor was of yours. Would you therefore have considered yourself dishonored by the alliance of the head of your family, and would not this disdain redound to you yourself? How many great names would fall into oblivion if we took account only of

those which began with a man worthy of respect? Let us judge the past by the present; for two or three Citizens who gain fame by honest means, a thousand rascals ennoble their families every day; and what will this nobility prove that their descendants will be so proud of, if not the thefts and infamy of their ancestor?*[138] One sees, I admit, many dishonest people among the commoners; but there is always twenty to wager against one that a gentleman descends from a knave. Let us leave aside origins, if you wish, and weigh merit and services. You have borne arms for a foreign Prince, his father bore them freely for the fatherland. If you have indeed well served, you have been well paid, and whatever honor you have acquired in war, a hundred commoners have acquired even more than you.

What then, Milord Edward continued, does this nobility you are so proud of have to distinguish it? What does it do for the glory of the fatherland or the happiness of the human race? Mortal enemy of laws and liberty, what has it ever produced in most countries where it flourishes, other than the power of tyranny and the oppression of peoples? Do you dare in a Republic pride yourself on a station destructive of virtues and humanity? on a station in which one boasts of slavery, and feels ashamed of being a man? Read the annals of your fatherland**[139]; in what way has your order deserved its thanks? What nobles do you count among her liberators? Were the *Fürsts*, the *Tells*, the *Stouffachers*[140] noblemen? What then is this insane glory you make such commotion about? That of serving a man, and being a burden on the State.

Imagine, my dear, how I suffered to see this honorable man thus damaging with a bitterness that was out of place the interests of the friend he wanted to serve. Indeed, your father, angered by so many stinging although general invectives, began to refute them with particulars. He said clearly to Milord Edward that a man of his condition had never made statements like those which he had just allowed himself. Do not plead futilely the cause of another, he added in a curt voice; great lord that you are, I doubt you could well defend your own on the subject in question. You ask my daughter's hand for your pretended friend without even knowing if you would yourself be a good enough match for her, and I know enough of the English nobility to get from what you have said a mediocre opinion of yours.

For God's sake! said Milord, whatever you think of me, I should be very sorry to have no other proof of my merit than that of a man dead for

* Letters of nobility are rare in our century, and they have even been illustrated at least once. But as for nobility that is acquired by money and bought along with offices, the most honorable thing I see in it is the privilege of not being hanged.

** This is highly inaccurate. The Pays de Vaud has never been part of Switzerland. It is a conquest of the inhabitants of Berne, and its own are neither citizens nor free, but subjects.

five hundred years. If you know English nobility, you know it is the most enlightened, best educated, wisest, and most valiant in Europe: with that, I have no need to inquire whether it is the most ancient; for when one speaks of what it is, the question is not what it was. We are not, it is true, the Prince's slaves but his friends, not the people's tyrant but its leaders. Guardians of liberty, mainstays of the fatherland, and pillars of the throne, we form an indestructible equilibrium between the people and the King. Our first duty is toward the nation; the second, toward him who governs it: we consult not his will but his right. Supreme ministers of the laws in the House of Lords, sometimes even legislators, we give equal justice to the people and to the King, and we do not suffer anyone to say: *Dieu et mon épée*, but only: *Dieu et mon droit*.[141]

So you see, Monsieur, he continued, what is this respectable nobility, as ancient as any other, but more proud of its merit than of its ancestors, and of which you speak without knowing it. I am not the least in rank among this illustrious order, and believe, despite your pretensions, I am your equal in every respect. I have a sister to marry: she is noble, young, amiable, rich; she yields to Julie only in qualities to which you attach no value. If whoever has felt your daughter's charms could turn his eyes and heart elsewhere, what an honor it would be for me to accept without fortune as my Brother-in-law the very person I propose as your Son-in-law with half my fortune!

I perceived from your father's reply that this conversation only embittered him, and, although filled with admiration for Milord Edward's generosity, I could tell that a man as unsociable as he was only likely to ruin definitively the negotiation he had undertaken. I therefore hastened to go back in before things went further. My return broke off the conversation, and they separated rather coldly a moment later. As for my father, I thought he conducted himself very well during this argument. At first he seconded the proposition warmly; but seeing that your father wanted nothing to do with it, and that the dispute was beginning to heat up, he reverted as reason would have it to his Brother-in-law's side,[142] and by interrupting both of them opportunely with moderate observations, kept them both within the bounds they would likely have exceeded had they remained alone together. After their departure, he confided to me what had just transpired, and as I foresaw what he was coming to, I hastened to tell him that things being as they were, it was no longer proper for the person in question to see you so often here, and that it would be improper for him to come at all, if that would not be to commit a sort of affront to Monsieur d'Orbe whose friend he was; but I would entreat him to bring him more seldom,

and Milord Edward as well. That, my dear, is the best I could do to avoid having our door completely shut to them.

Nor is that all. The crisis I see you undergoing forces me to revise my earlier warnings. The affair of Milord Edward and your friend produced as much scandal in the town as we could have expected. Although Monsieur d'Orbe kept the secret about the substance of the quarrel, too many clues give it away for it to remain hidden. There are suspicions, conjectures, you are named: the nightwatch's report is not so well hushed up as not to be recalled, and you are not unaware that in the public's eyes a truth suspected is all but evident. All I can say for your consolation is that in general your choice is approved, and the union of such a charming couple would be countenanced with pleasure; which confirms to me that your friend has conducted himself well hereabouts and is hardly less beloved than you: but what is the public voice to your unbending father? All these rumors have reached him or will, and I shudder at the effect they can produce, unless you hasten to turn aside his anger. You must expect an explanation from him that will be terrifying for you, and perhaps even worse for your friend: not that I think he would want at his age to measure his sword with a young man who to him is unworthy of it; but the power he has in the town would furnish him, if he wished, a thousand means for having him done in, and it is to be feared that his wrath will inspire in him the will to do so.

I beg you on my knees, my sweet friend, be mindful of the dangers that surround you, the risk of which grows at every instant. Incredible luck has protected you up till now in the midst of all this, while there is still time place the seal of prudence on the secret of your embraces; and do not press fortune to her limit, lest in your calamities she engulf the one who has caused them. Believe me, my angel, the future is uncertain; a thousand events can, in time, offer unexpected resources; but as for now, I have said and repeat more strongly, send your friend away, or you are undone.

LETTER LXIII

From Julie to Claire

Everything you had predicted, my dear, has come to pass. Yesterday an hour after our return, my father entered my mother's room, his eyes flashing, his face inflamed; in a state, simply put, I had never seen him in. I understood right off that he had just had a quarrel or was looking for one, and my troubled conscience made me tremble in advance.

He began by harshly but in general apostrophizing mothers who indiscreetly invite into their homes young men lacking status or name, whose acquaintance brings nothing but shame and dishonor on the women who listen to them. Then seeing that this did not suffice to provoke some response from an intimidated wife, he bluntly offered as an example what had occurred in our house, since the time a purported wit,[143] an empty talker, more likely to corrupt a virtuous maiden than impart to her any good instruction, had been introduced. My mother, who saw she would gain little by saying nothing, took him up on the word corruption, and asked him what he found in the conduct or the reputation of the honorable man of whom he spoke, that might justify such suspicions. I did not believe, she added, that cleverness and merit were reasons for exclusion from our society. To whom then should we open our house if talents and morals do not gain entry? To people of our sort, Madame, he replied in anger, who can restore the honor of a daughter when they have offended it. No, she said, but to people of good faith who do not offend it. Be apprised, he said, that it is an offense to the honor of a household to dare solicit its alliance without titles for obtaining it. Far from seeing an offense in that, said my mother, I see on the contrary only a token of esteem. Moreover, I am unaware that he against whom you are so overwrought has done anything of the kind with respect to you. He has done so, Madame, and will do still worse unless I put a halt to it; but have no doubt that I shall attend to duties you discharge so ill.

Then began a dangerous altercation which informed me that the town rumors you speak of were unknown to my parents, but during which your unworthy Cousin wished she could hide a hundred feet underground. Imagine the most excellent and most deceived of mothers speaking well of her guilty daughter, and praising, alas! all the virtues she has lost, in the most honorable terms, or to put it better, the most humiliating. Picture an angry father, overflowing with offensive epithets, and who in all his rage does not let escape a single one that would indicate the slightest doubt about the purity of her who is torn by remorse and crushed by shame in his presence. Oh what an unbelievable torment for an abased conscience, to reproach oneself for crimes that anger and indignation could not suspect! What a crushing and unbearable burden is false praise, and esteem that the heart secretly rejects! I felt so oppressed by it that in order to free myself from such a cruel torture I was prepared to avow everything, if my father had left me time; but the impetuousness of his rage caused him to repeat the same things a hundred times over, and change the subject at every instant. He noted my deportment, downcast, frantic, humiliated, the index of my remorse. If he did not draw from it the consequence of my

guilt, he did draw that of my love, and to shame me the more, he slandered its object in terms so odious, and so contemptuous that I could not despite all my efforts let him pursue without interrupting him.

I scarce know, my dear, where I found such boldness and what momentary distraction let me so forget duty and modesty; but if I dared for an instant to end my respectful silence, I bore, as you are about to see, the rather merciless penalty for it. In Heaven's name, I said to him, please compose yourself; never will a man worthy of such insults be threatening to me. At that instant, my father, who thought he detected a reproach in those words and whose wrath awaited only a pretext, rushed at your poor friend: for the first time in my life, I received a box on the ear which was not the last, and yielding to his transport with a violence equal to what its containment had cost in effort, he beat me mercilessly, although my mother had thrown herself between us, covered me with her body, and received some of the blows that were intended for me. Recoiling to elude them, I stumbled, fell, and my face hurtled into the foot of a table, making me bleed.

Here ended the triumph of anger and began that of nature. My fall, my blood, my tears, those of my mother moved him. He lifted me up looking anxious and solicitous, and after sitting me on a chair, they both examined closely whether I was not hurt. I had only a slight contusion on the forehead and was bleeding only from the nose. Meanwhile, I perceived from my father's change of attitude and voice that he was displeased with what he had just done. He did not come back to me with caresses, paternal dignity would not suffer such an abrupt change; but he came back to my mother with tender apologies, and I saw so clearly, from the glances he cast furtively toward me, that half of it all was addressed indirectly to me. No, my dear, there is no mortification as touching as that of a tender father who thinks he has put himself in the wrong. The heart of a father feels it is made for forgiveness, and not to have need of forgiveness.

Supper time had come; it was put off to allow me time to recover, and my father not wanting the servants to witness my disorder went himself to fetch me a glass of water, while my mother sponged my face. Alas, poor maman! Already languishing and a valetudinarian, she would gladly have dispensed with such a scene, and was hardly less in need of assistance than I.

At table, he did not speak to me; but this silence was one of shame and not disdain; he made a point of saying how good each dish was so he could ask my mother to serve me some, and the thing that moved me the most sensibly, was to observe that he looked for opportunities to call me his daughter, and not Julie as usual.

After supper, the air was so cold that my mother had a fire built in her room. She sat down at one corner of the fireplace and my father at the

other. I was going to get a chair to place myself between them, when catching me by my dress and pulling me toward him without a word, he sat me down on his lap. All this happened so swiftly, and from such an involuntary impulse that he almost regretted it a moment later. Meanwhile I was on his lap, he could not take that back, and what was worse for his dignity was that he had to hold me embraced in this awkward position. All this was taking place in silence; but from time to time I felt his arms pressing against my sides as he tried to stifle a sigh. I know not what false shame prevented these paternal arms from giving in to those sweet embraces; a certain gravity he dared not lay aside, a certain mortification he dared not overcome placed between a father and his daughter the sort of charming embarrassment that modesty and love lend to lovers; meanwhile a tender mother, overwhelmed with joy, secretly devoured a sight so sweet. I saw, I felt all that, my angel, and could no longer hold out against the emotion that was taking hold of me. I pretended to slip; to catch myself I threw an arm around my father's neck; I leaned my face over his venerable face, and in an instant he was covered with my kisses and inundated with my tears. I could tell from those that flowed from his eyes that he himself was relieved of a great heartache; my mother came over to join in our transports. Sweet and peaceful innocence, my heart lacked nothing but thee to make of this natural scene the most delightful moment in my life!

This morning, weariness and the aftereffects of my fall having kept me in bed a bit late, my father came into my room before I had risen; he sat down beside my bed, inquiring tenderly after my health; he took one of my hands in his, he humbled himself so far as to kiss it several times, calling me his dear daughter, and expressing his regret for his rage. For my part, I told him, and I believe it, that I would be only too happy to be beaten every day at the same price, and that there is no treatment so rough that a single caress from him would not blot it from my heart.

After that, adopting a graver tone, he brought me back to yesterday's subject and informed me of his will in polite but specific terms. You know, he said to me, to whom I have promised you, I so informed you as soon as I arrived, and will never change my intention on this point. As for the man Milord Edward mentioned to me, although I do not dispute the merit everyone attributes to him, I do not know whether he conceived by himself the ridiculous hope of securing my alliance, or whether someone suggested it to him; but even if I had no one in view and he had all the guineas in England, you may be sure that I would never accept such a son-in-law. I forbid you to see him and speak to him in your life, and this, as much for the safety of his life as for your honor. Although I have always felt little in-

clination for him, I hate him now above all for the excesses he caused me to commit, and shall never forgive him my brutality.

At these words, he left without awaiting my reply, and with almost the same air of severity he had just reproached himself. Ah, my Cousin, what monsters from hell are these prejudices that deprave the best hearts, and at every instant reduce nature to silence?

Thus transpired, my Claire, the explanation you had foreseen, and the cause of which I could not understand until your letter apprised me of it. I cannot well express the revolution that has taken place in me, but since that moment I find myself changed. It seems to me that I turn my eyes more regretfully toward the happy time when I lived peacefully and content in the bosom of my family, and that I feel the sentiment of my fault growing, along with that of the good things it has made me lose. Tell me, cruel cousin! tell me if you dare, could the time of love have passed and must we never see one another again? Ah, do you fully feel all the gloom and horror of that fatal thought? Yet my father's order is precise, my lover's danger is certain! Do you know what is produced in me by so many contrary movements that cancel each other out? A sort of stupor that renders my soul almost insensible, and leaves me without the use of either passions or reason. The moment is critical, you said so and I can sense it; yet, I was never less in a condition to guide myself. I have twenty times been on the point of writing to my beloved: I am on the point of fainting at every line and cannot trace two together. I have nothing left but you, my sweet friend, be so good as to think, speak, act for me; I place my fate in your hands; whatever choice you make, I endorse in advance everything you will do; I entrust to your friendship this lethal power that love sold me so dearly. Sunder me forever from myself; give me death if I must die, but do not force me to pierce my heart by my own hand.

O my angel! My protector! What a horrible role I am leaving to you! Will you have the courage to discharge it? Will you find a way to mitigate its cruelty? Alas! It is not my heart alone that must be rent. Claire, you well know, you well know, how loved I am! I have not even the consolation of being the more pitiable of us. Have mercy! Make my heart speak with your voice; fill your own with the tender commiseration of love; console an unfortunate man! Tell him a hundred times..... Ah, tell him..... Do you not believe, dear friend, that despite all the prejudices, all the obstacles, all the setbacks, Heaven has made us for each other? Oh yes, I am sure of it; it has destined us to be united. It is impossible for me to forsake this thought; it is impossible for me to give up the hope that follows from it. Tell him to preserve himself from discouragement and despair. Do not

waste time asking him for love and fidelity in my name; still less in promising him the same from me. Are they not assured in the depths of our souls? Do we not feel that they are indivisible, and that we no longer have but one between us? Simply tell him then to hope; and if fate pursues us, to trust himself at least to love: for, I can sense it, my Cousin, it will heal one way or the other the wounds it inflicts on us, and however Heaven may dispose of us, we shall not long live apart.

P. S. After writing my letter, I went into my mother's room, and I became so sick that I am obliged to come put myself back to bed. I even can detect..... I fear..... ah, my dear! I do fear that my fall yesterday may have some more fatal consequence than I had thought. So then all is finished for me; all my expectations abandon me at the same time.

LETTER LXIV

From Claire to Monsieur d'Orbe

My father has related to me this morning the conversation he had yesterday with you. I perceive with pleasure that everything is progressing toward what it pleases you to call your happiness. I hope, as you know, that I will find mine in it too; esteem and friendship are already yours, and all that my heart can sustain in the way of tenderer sentiments goes to you as well. But make no mistake; as a woman I am a sort of monster, and by I know not what quirk of nature friendship for me takes precedence over love. When I tell you that my Julie is dearer to me than you, you merely laugh, and yet nothing is more true. Julie feels it so well that she is more jealous for you than you are yourself, and while you appear content, she always finds that I do not love you enough. There is more, and I am so attached to all that is dear to her that her lover and you have about equal rank in my heart, although in different manners. I have for him only friendship, but it is more intense; I think I feel a little love for you, but it is more placid. Although all this may appear nearly enough equivalent to trouble a jealous man's peace, I do not think yours is much disturbed by it.

How far the poor children are from this sweet tranquillity we dare to enjoy; and how ungracious our contentment seems while our friends are in despair! It is over, they must part; this is perhaps the moment of their eternal separation, and the sadness for which we reproached them the day of the concert was perhaps a foreboding that they were seeing one another for the last time. Meanwhile, your friend knows nothing of his misfortune: in the security of his heart he still enjoys the happiness he has lost; at

the moment of despair he savors in his mind a phantom of felicity; and like someone taken off by an unanticipated demise, the poor man is preoccupied with living and does not see that he is nearly in death's grasp. Alas! It is from my hand that he is to receive that terrible blow! O divine friendship! Sole idol of my heart! Come inspire in it thy holy cruelty. Give me the courage to be heartless, and to serve thee worthily in such a painful duty.

I am counting on you on this occasion and would do so even if you loved me less; for I know your soul; I know it has no need of the zeal of love, where that of humanity speaks. First you must prevail upon our friend to come to my house tomorrow morning. Take care, moreover, not to divulge anything to him. Today I have my freedom, and I shall spend the afternoon at Julie's; try to find Milord Edward, and come alone with him to await me at eight o'clock, so that we can agree together about what we shall have to do to determine this unfortunate man to depart, and counter his despair.

I have much hope in his courage and our attentions. I have even more in his love. Julie's will, the present danger to her life and honor are motives he will not resist. Be that as it may, I declare to you that there shall be no question of a wedding for us until Julie is at peace, and never shall my friend's tears accompany the tie that is to bind us. Thus, Monsieur, if it is true that you love me, your interest accords on this occasion with your generosity; and this is not someone else's business to the point of not being your own as well.

LETTER LXV

From Claire to Julie

Everything has been taken care of; and despite her imprudence, my Julie is safe. The secrets of your heart are buried in the shadow of mystery; you are still in the bosom of your family and your country, cherished, honored, enjoying a spotless reputation, and universal respect. Consider with a shudder the dangers that shame or love have made you incur by doing too much or too little. Learn never more to try reconciling incompatible sentiments, and bless Heaven, lover too blind or daughter too fearful, for a happiness that was reserved only to you.

I wanted to spare your sad heart the detail of such a cruel and necessary separation. You have wished it, I have promised it, I will keep my word with that same frankness we have for each other, and which never placed any advantage in the scale against good faith. Read on then, dear and pa-

thetic friend; read on, since you must; but take heart and keep a firm hold on yourself.

All the measures I had taken and told you about yesterday have been followed to the letter. Upon returning home I found Monsieur d'Orbe and Milord Edward. I began by declaring to the latter what we knew about his heroic generosity, and let him know how deeply appreciative we both were. Then, I explained to them the powerful reasons we had to send his friend away promptly, and the difficulties I foresaw in persuading him to accept it. Milord perfectly sensed all that and expressed much grief at the effect his thoughtless zeal had produced. They agreed that it was important to precipitate his friend's departure, and seize upon the first indication of willingness to forestall further irresolution, and snatch him away from the continual danger of tarrying. I wanted to commission Monsieur d'Orbe to make suitable preparations without his knowledge; but Milord considering this affair as his own, wanted to take care of that himself. He promised me that his chaise would be ready this morning at eleven, adding that he would accompany him as far as necessary, and first proposed to take him off under some other pretext so as to determine him more at leisure. This expedient did not seem to me frank enough for us and our friend, nor did I wish to expose him far from us to the first effect of a despair that could more easily escape Milord's notice than mine. For the same reason, I did not accept his proposition to speak to him himself and obtain his consent. I foresaw that this negotiation would be delicate, and did not want to entrust anyone but myself with it; for I know more surely the sensible spots in his heart, and I know that between men there always obtains a formality which a woman can better allay. At the same time, I realized that Milord's efforts would not be without utility to us for readying things. I saw all the effect that the comments of a sensible man who thinks of himself only as a philosopher could have on a virtuous heart, and what warmth the voice of a friend could lend to the reasonings of a sage.

I therefore engaged Milord Edward to spend the evening with him, and, without saying anything that had a direct connection to his own situation, imperceptibly incline his soul to stoic firmness. You who know your Epictetus so well, I said to him; this is the case if ever to put him to good use. Distinguish carefully between real and apparent good; that which is within us and that which is without. At a time when an ordeal is looming from the outside, prove to him that one never receives any evil except from oneself, and that the sage, carrying it with him wherever he goes, also carries his happiness wherever he goes. I understood from his response that this touch of irony, which could not annoy him, was enough to provoke his zeal, and that he was quite confident he would the next day send me

your friend well prepared. I had expected no more than that: although fundamentally I do not think too highly, any more than you do, of all this prating philosophy,[144] I am persuaded that an honorable man is always a little ashamed to change his maxims from one day to the next, and to belie in his heart the very next day everything that reason dictated the night before.

Monsieur d'Orbe wanted to be present as well, and spend the evening with them, but I begged him to do no such thing; he would only have been bored or rendered the conversation awkward. The interest I take in him does not prevent my seeing that he is not of the same feather as the two others. That virile thinking of strong souls that gives them such a particular idiom is a language whose grammar he does not know. In taking leave of them, I was reminded of the punch, and fearful of premature confidences I hinted as much in jest to Milord. Rest assured, he said to me, I indulge in habits when I see no danger in it; but I have never become their slave; what is at stake here is Julie's honor, the destiny, perhaps the life of a man and my friend. I shall drink punch in keeping with my custom, for fear of lending the conversation a concerted air; but that punch will be lemonade, and since he refrains from drinking any, he will not notice. Do you not find, my dear, that it must be highly humiliating to have contracted habits that force one to such precautions?

I spent the night in great agitations that were not all on your account. The innocent pleasures of our early youth; the sweetness of an old familiarity; the even closer association between him and me in the last year because of the difficulty he had in seeing you; all these impressed on my soul the bitterness of this separation. I felt that I was about to lose, along with half of yourself, a part of my own existence. I counted the hours anxiously, and seeing the first rays of light, it was not without fright I saw the day dawn that was to decide your fate. I spent the morning thinking about what I would say and reflecting on the impression it might make. Finally, the hour came and I saw your friend enter. He appeared uneasy, and urgently asked for news of you; for the very day following your scene with your father, he had learned that you were ill, and Milord Edward had confirmed to him yesterday that you had not been out of bed. In order to avoid the details of that topic, I told him right away that I had left you improved last evening, and I added that he would soon learn more when Hanz whom I had just sent to you returned. My precaution was of no use, he asked me a hundred questions about your state, and since they were taking me far from my objective, I gave succinct answers, and began to ask him questions in return.

First I sounded his disposition of mind. I found him grave, methodical,

and prepared to weigh sentiment against reason. Thank Heaven, said I to myself, my sage is well prepared. It remains only to put him to the test. Although the usual practice is to break sad news little by little, my acquaintance with his tempestuous imagination, which leaps at a word to extreme consequences, led me to follow an opposite path, and I preferred to crush him right away in order to allow for softening the blow subsequently, rather than needlessly multiplying his woes and inflicting him with them a thousand times over. Thus adopting a more serious tone and looking straight at him: my friend, I said to him, do you know the limits of courage and virtue in a stalwart soul, and do you believe that giving up someone he loves is beyond a man's strength? He instantly rose like a madman, then clapping his hands together and putting them thus joined to his forehead, I hear you, he cried out, Julie is dead! Julie is dead! he repeated in a voice that made me shudder: I can tell by your devious attentions, your vain precautions, which only make my death slower and more cruel.

Although frightened by such a sudden reaction, I had soon guessed the cause, and I immediately figured out how the news of your illness, Milord Edward's moral lessons, this morning's appointment, the questions I eluded, those I had just put to him could have precipitated him into false alarms. I also saw the use I could make of his mistake by leaving him there for a few moments; but I could not resign myself to such cruelty. The idea of the death of one's beloved is so awful that anything else would be bearable in its place, and I hastened to profit from this advantage. You will perhaps never see her again, I told him; but she lives and loves you. Ah! If Julie were dead, would Claire have anything to say to you? Give thanks to Heaven who spares your misfortune evils with which it could crush you. He was so astonished, so dumbfounded, so distracted, that after having him sit down again, I had the time to spell out clearly everything he needed to know, and I stressed as best I could the steps Milord Edward had taken, in order to create in his honest heart some diversion to his suffering, through the conjurations of gratitude.

Such, my friend, I continued, is the present state of things. Julie is on the edge of the abyss, about to see herself crushed with public dishonor, her family's indignation, the violence of an angered father, and her own despair. The danger is steadily increasing: by her father's hand or her own, the dagger is at every instant of her life within an inch of her heart. There remains a single means of avoiding all these evils, and that means is in your power alone. The fate of your lover is in your hands. Consider whether you have the courage to save her by leaving her, since in any case she is no longer allowed to see you, or whether you would rather be the cause and witness of her undoing and ignominy. After doing everything for you, she

is going to see what your heart can do for her. Is it a wonder that her health is the victim of her distresses? You are anxious for her life: know that you are its arbiter.

He was listening to me without interrupting; but as soon as he had understood what it was about, I perceived the disappearance of the gesticulation, the wild gaze, the frightened, but intense and fervid mien that were his before. A dark veil of sorrow and consternation came over his face: his glazed eye and wan countenance betrayed his heart's dejection: he had scarcely the strength to open his mouth to answer me. I must go, he said with a voice that anyone else would have thought tranquil. All right, I shall go. Have I not lived enough? No, doubtless, I quickly replied; you must live for the one who loves you: have you forgotten that her days depend on yours? Then they shouldn't have been separated, he instantly added; she could have made it otherwise and she still can. I pretended not to hear these last words, and tried to revive him with some hopes to which his soul remained unreceptive, when Hanz returned, bearing me good news. In the moment of joy it gave him, he exclaimed: Ah, may she live! may she be happy.... if it is possible. I only want to bid her my final farewells.... and I shall go. Are you not aware, I said, that she isn't allowed to see you. Alas! Your farewells are already bidden, and you are already separated! Your fate will be less cruel when you are far from her; you will at least have the pleasure of having left her in safety. Fly this very day, this very instant; beware lest so great a sacrifice come too late; tremble lest you cause her undoing after renouncing yourself for her. What! he said to me with a kind of fury, leave without seeing her? What! not see her again? No, no, we will both perish, if we must; death, I am sure will not be hard for her with me: but I will see her, come what may; I will leave my heart and my life at her feet, before I will tear myself from my very self. It was not difficult for me to show him the folly and cruelty of such a design. But that *What! not see her again?* which kept coming back in more mournful tones, seemed to seek at least some consolations for the future. Why, I said to him, suppose your woes worse than they are? Why give up hopes that Julie herself has not lost? Do you think she could be thus separated from you, if she believed it were forever? No, my friend, you must know her heart. You must know how much she prefers her love to her life. I fear, I too greatly fear (these words I admit are my addition), that she may soon prefer it to everything. Believe therefore that she hopes, since she consents to live: believe that the measures prudence dictates have more to do with you than it seems, and that she respects herself no less for your sake than for hers. Then I pulled out your last letter, and showing him the tender hopes of that blinded maiden who thinks she has no more love, I rekin-

dled his with that sweet warmth. These few lines seemed to distill a salutary balm into his poisoned wound. I saw his gaze soften and tears rise in his eyes; I saw tenderness gradually displace despair; but these last touching words, such as your heart can utter them: *We shall not long live apart*, made him melt in tears. No Julie, no my Julie, he said raising his voice and kissing the letter, we shall not long live apart; Heaven will join our destinies on earth, or our hearts in the eternal abode.

This was the state to which I had hoped to lead him. His tearless and somber sorrow had worried me. I would not have let him depart in this situation of mind; but once I saw him weep, and heard your cherished name come softly from his mouth, I no longer feared for his life; for nothing is less tender than despair. At this moment he drew from his heart's emotion an objection which I had not anticipated. He spoke to me of the condition you suspected you were in, swearing that he would die a thousand deaths before he would abandon you to all the perils that were about to threaten you. I made a point of not mentioning your accident; I simply told him that your expectation had again been disappointed, and there was nothing more to hope for. Thus, he said to me with a sigh, there will remain on earth no monument of my happiness; it has disappeared like a dream that never had any reality.

It remained for me to carry out the last part of your mission, and I did not think that after the union in which you have lived, it required either preparation or secrecy. I would not even have evaded a bit of disagreement over this unimportant topic in order to avoid having to return to our previous subject of conversation. I upbraided him for his negligence in looking after his own business. I told him you feared he had not been attentive to it for a long while, and that until he did, you were ordering him to preserve himself for you, make better provision for his needs, and to this end to take the responsibility for the small supplement I was to give him on your behalf. He neither appeared humiliated by this proposition, nor attempted to make much of it. He simply told me that you surely knew that nothing from you would be received with less than transport; but your precaution was superfluous, and a small house he had just sold*[145] at Grandson,[146] the remainder of his slim patrimony, had furnished him more money than he had possessed in his lifetime. Moreover, he added, I have some talents on which I can draw anywhere. I shall be too happy to find in their exercise some diversion from my woes, and since I have seen more

* I am hard pressed to know how this anonymous lover, of whom it is said later that he is not yet twenty-four, was able to sell a house, not being of age. These Letters are so full of similar absurdities that I shall no longer mention them; it is enough to have called attention to them.

closely the use to which Julie puts her extra money, I consider it the sacred treasury of the widow and the orphan, of which humanity allows me to take nothing. I reminded him of his journey to the Valais, your letter, and the exactness of your orders. The same reasons subsist.... the same ones! he interrupted with indignation. The penalty for my refusal was never to see her again: may she then let me stay, and I accept. If I obey, why does she punish me? If I refuse, what worse can she do to me?..... The same ones! he repeated impatiently. Our union was beginning; it is now about to end; perhaps I am to be forever separated from her; there is no longer anything common between her and me; we are going to be strangers to each other. He pronounced these last words with such a heavy heart that I trembled lest I see him fall back into the state out of which I had had such difficulty bringing him. You are a child, I affected to say gaily; you still need a preceptor and I want to be yours. I am going to keep this, and in order to use it appropriately in the relations we are going to maintain, I want to be informed of all your business. I was trying in this way to turn aside his grim thoughts with that of a familiar correspondence maintained between us, and that simple soul who seeks only, so to speak, to latch onto what surrounds you, easily took the bait. We then agreed on the addresses we would put on Letters, and as these measures could only be agreeable to him, I made the detail of it last until Monsieur d'Orbe arrived, motioning to me that all was ready.

Your friend easily understood what was at issue; he forcefully demanded to write to you, but I took care not to allow it. I could see that an excess of tenderness would sap strength from his heart, and he would scarcely get halfway into his letter, than there would no longer be any way to make him leave. All delays are dangerous, I said to him; make haste to arrive at the first waystation whence you can write her at your leisure. Saying that, I signalled to Monsieur d'Orbe; I stepped forward, and with a heart full with sobs, I pressed my face against his; I knew no more of what happened to him; tears blocked my view, my head started to swim, and it was time for my role to end.

A moment afterward I heard them rush down the stairs. I went out on the landing to watch them go: this last detail was all my troubled mind needed. I saw the madman throw himself on his knees in the middle of the staircase, kiss the steps a thousand times, and d'Orbe scarcely able to pull him from the cold stone which he pressed with his body, his head and his arms, uttering long moans. I felt my own on the verge of bursting forth despite myself, and I abruptly came back in, for fear of creating a scene for the whole household.

A few moments later, Monsieur d'Orbe returned holding his handker-

chief to his eyes. It is done, he said to me, they are on their way. When he arrived home, your friend found the chaise at his door; Milord Edward was waiting for him also; he ran up to him and clutching him to his chest: *Come, unfortunate man*, he said with a solemn voice, *come pour your sufferings into this heart that loves you. Come, you will perhaps sense that you have not lost everything on earth, when you still find a friend such as me*. At that instant, he ushered him with a strong arm into the chaise, and they left holding each other in a tight embrace.

End of Part One.

Part Two

LETTER I

To Julie*

I have taken up the pen a hundred times and put it down again; I hesitate at the very first word; I know not what tone to adopt; I know not where to begin; and it is to Julie I mean to write! Wretched me! What has become of me? That time is then no more when a thousand delightful sentiments flowed from my pen like an endless torrent! Those sweet moments of confidence and effusion are a thing of the past: we are no longer each other's, we are no longer the same, and I no longer know to whom I write. Will you deign to accept my letters? Will your eyes deign to scan them? Will you find them sufficiently reserved, sufficiently circumspect? Dare I still retain a former familiarity? Dare I invoke a love that is spent or spurned, and am I not further removed than the first day I wrote to you? What a difference, O Heaven, between those days that were so enchanting and so sweet, and my frightful misery! Alas! I was beginning to exist and I have fallen into nothingness; the hope of living quickened my heart; I have nothing left before me but the image of death, and a span of three years has brought the felicitous circle of my days to a close. Ah, why did I not end them before I outlived myself! Why did I not follow my intimations after those brief moments of delight, when I saw nothing left in life worthy of prolonging it! Doubtless, it should have been confined to those three years or they should have been removed from its compass; it were better never to have tasted felicity than to have tasted and then lost it. If I had crossed over that fateful interval, if I had eluded that first glance that made a new soul in me, I would still be in possession of my reason; I would be fulfilling a man's duties, and would perhaps scatter a few virtues along my dull career. The error of a moment has changed all that. My eye dared to behold what it had no right to see. That sight has at last produced its inevitable effect. Having gone more and more awry, I am by now just a madman whose sense has left him, a craven slave wanting strength or courage, who wanders about ignominiously trailing his chain and his despair.

* I believe I hardly need to notify the reader that in this second part and the next, the two separated Lovers do nothing but rave and wander about; they have lost their poor heads.

Vain dreams of a mind going awry! False and deceitful desires, instantly disavowed by the heart that has conceived them! What is the use of imagining, for real ills, illusory remedies that we would reject if they were offered us? Ah! Who, understanding love and having laid eyes on you, will ever believe there could exist some felicity that I would be willing to purchase at the price of my first flame? No, no, let Heaven keep its blessings and leave me, with my misery, the remembrance of my former happiness. I prefer the pleasures that are in my memory and the regrets that rend my soul to being forever happy without my Julie. Image I worship, come fill a heart that lives only by thee[1]: come with me in my exile, console me in my sufferings, rekindle and sustain my spent hope. Forever shall this unfortunate heart be thine inviolable sanctuary, whence fate nor men shall never be able to wrest thee. I may be dead to happiness, but not to the love that makes me worthy of it. That love is invincible like the charm that brought it into being. It is founded on the unshakable basis of merit and virtues; it cannot perish in an immortal soul; it no longer needs the support of hope, and the past gives it strength for an everlasting future.

But you, Julie, O you who once were able to love! How has your tender heart forgotten to live? How has that sacred fire died out in your pure soul? How have you lost the taste for those celestial pleasures which you alone were capable of feeling and returning? You drive me mercilessly away; you banish me in disgrace; you abandon me to my despair, and you do not see, in the error that leads you awry, that by making me miserable you suppress your life's happiness. Ah, Julie, believe me; you will seek in vain another heart akin to yours! A thousand will worship you, no doubt; mine alone knew how to love you.

Answer me, now, deceived or deceitful Lover: what has become of those plans contrived in such secrecy? Where are those vain expectations with which you so often baited my naive credulity? Where is that holy and desired union, the sweet object so ardently wished for, with which your pen and your mouth flattered my wishes? Alas! on the faith of your promises I dared aspire to the sacred name of husband, and already counted myself the happiest of men. Tell me, cruel Julie! Did you delude me only to make my suffering ultimately more intense and my humiliation more profound? Have I called forth my misfortunes through my own fault? Have I lacked obedience, docility, discretion? Have you seen me desire so feebly as to deserve being shown the door, or choose my impetuous desires over your supreme dictates? I have done everything to please you and you abandon me! My happiness was in your hands, and you have ruined me! Give me an account, ingrate, of the charge I have entrusted to you: give me an account of myself after leading my heart astray into that supreme fe-

licity that you have shown me and now are taking away. Angels of Heaven! I would have scorned your fate. I would have been the happiest of beings..... Alas! now I am nothing, a moment has taken everything away. I have passed without transition from consummate pleasures to endless regrets: I can still almost touch the happiness that escapes me.... I can still almost touch it, and am losing it for ever!..... Ah if I could believe that! If the remnants of a vain hope did not sustain..... O cliffs of Meillerie that my distraught eye measured so many times, why did you not serve my despair! I could more easily have renounced life when I had not yet sensed its value.

LETTER II

From Milord Edward to Claire

We have reached Besançon,[2] and my first duty is to give you news of our journey. It has gone if not peacefully, at least without incident, and your friend is as healthy of body as one can be with a heart so sick. He would even like to affect a sort of tranquility on the outside. He is ashamed of his condition, and controls himself carefully in my presence; but everything betrays his secret turmoil, and if I pretend to be taken in, it is to leave him to his struggle with himself, and thus occupy one part of his soul's strength with repressing the effect of the other.

He was quite downcast on the first day; I shortened it seeing that the quickness of our advance aggravated his suffering. He did not speak to me, nor I to him; indiscreet consolations can only irritate violent afflictions.[3] Indifference and reserve easily find words; but sadness and silence are then the true language of friendship. I began yesterday to perceive the first sparks of the fury that is infallibly going to follow upon this lethargy: at the halt for dinner, scarcely a quarter-hour after we had arrived he accosted me with an impatient mien. Why is it taking us so long to leave, he said to me with a bitter smile, why do we tarry even a moment so near her? In the evening he made a point of talking a good deal, without uttering a word about Julie. He rehearsed questions I had answered ten times. He wanted to know if we were on French soil yet, and then he asked if we would soon arrive at Vevey.[4] The first thing he does at each relay, is to begin a letter which he tears up or wads up a moment later. I have saved two or three of these drafts from the fire, from which you will get a glimpse of his soul's condition. I believe however that he has managed to write an entire letter.

The anger these first symptoms suggest is easy to foresee; but I have no way of knowing what will be its effect and duration; for that depends on a

combination of the man's character, the type of his passion, the circumstances that may arise, a thousand things that no human prudence can determine. As for me, I can answer for his furies but not for his despair, and whatever we do, every man is still master of his own life.

I flatter myself, however, that he will respect his person and my care of him; and for that I rely less on the zeal of friendship, which will not be spared, than on the character of his passion and that of his mistress. The soul can hardly be powerfully and long occupied by an object without adopting dispositions related to that object. Julie's extreme gentleness must temper the sting of the flame she inspires, and I do not doubt either that the love of so high-spirited a man will make her somewhat more active than she would naturally be otherwise.

I venture also to rely on his heart; it is made to struggle and overcome. A love such as his is not so much a weakness as a strength put to the wrong use. An ardent and unhappy flame can occupy for a time, forever perhaps, part of his faculties; but it is itself a proof of their excellence, and of the advantage he could draw from them to cultivate wisdom: for sublime reason is maintained only by the same vigor of soul that makes for great passions, and philosophy is properly served only if it is practiced with the same ardor one feels for a mistress.

Be sure of this, gentle Claire; I take no less interest than you in the fate of this unhappy couple; not out of a sentiment of commiseration that might be only a weakness; but out of consideration for justice and order, which dictate that every person be placed in the most advantageous manner for himself and for society. These two beautiful souls came forth one for the other from the hands of nature; it is in a peaceful union, in the midst of happiness that, free to display their strengths and exercise their virtues, they would have illuminated the world with their example. Why must an insane prejudice come to alter eternal directions, and upset the harmony of thinking beings? Why does the vanity of a heartless father thus hide the light under a bushel,[5] and reduce to tearful laments tender and generous hearts born to wipe the tears of others? Is matrimony not the freest as well as the most sacred of engagements? Indeed, all laws that constrict it are unjust; all fathers who dare create or break it are tyrants. That chaste bond of nature is subject neither to sovereign power nor to paternal authority, but to the sole authority of the common father who has power over hearts, and who by ordering them to unite can force them to love each other.*[6]

* There are countries where this suitability of conditions and fortunes is so far preferred to that of nature and of hearts that the lack of the former is all it takes to prevent or break the happiest marriages, without considering the lost honor of the unfortunate women who fall every day victim to these odious prejudices. I have witnessed the pleading in the Parlement of

What does it mean thus to conform to opinion rather than to nature? Disparity of fortune and station is eclipsed and cancelled in marriage, and has nothing to do with happiness; but disparity of character and temper remains, and because of it one is happy or unhappy. The child who has no rule but love chooses badly, the father who has no rule but opinion chooses even worse. Should a daughter lack the reason, the experience, to discriminate in matters of wisdom and morals, a good father must doubtless compensate. His right, even his duty is to say: my daughter, he is an honorable man, or, he is a knave; he is a sensible man, or, he is a fool. Those are the kinds of conformity that must fall within his competence; discrimination of all others belongs to the daughter. By bellowing that the order of society would be disturbed, those tyrants disturb it themselves. Let rank be regulated by merit, and the union of hearts by their choice, that is the true social order; those who regulate it by birth or wealth are the true disrupters of that order; they are the ones who should be decried or punished.[7]

It is therefore in the interest of universal justice that these abuses be set aright; it is man's duty to oppose violence, contribute to order, and if it were in my power to unite these two lovers in spite of an unreasonable old man, do not doubt that in this way I would be accomplishing heaven's work, without worrying about the approval of men.

You are happier, gentle Claire; you have a father who does not pretend to know better than you how you can be made happy. It is perhaps neither out of grand notions of wisdom, nor of excessive tenderness that he makes you thus mistress of your fate; but what does the cause matter, if the effect is the same, and if, in the freedom he leaves you, indolence in his case stands in for reason? Far from abusing that freedom, the choice you have made at twenty would have the approval of the wisest father. Your heart, absorbed by a friendship that has never been equalled, has little room left for the flames of love. In their place you put everything that can compensate for them in marriage: less a lover than a friend, if you are not the tenderest wife, you will be the most virtuous, and that union wisely contracted will surely grow over time and last as long as wisdom itself. The heart's impulse is more blind, but it is more invincible: putting oneself in the position of having to resist it is a sure way to perdition. Happy those whom love pairs up as reason would have done, and who have no obstacle to overcome and prejudices to combat! Such would our two lovers be but for the unjust op-

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Paris of a famous case in which the honor of rank insolently and publicly attacked honesty, duty, conjugal faith, and where the unworthy father, who won his suit, dared to disinherit his son for not having wished to be a dishonorable man. It is impossible to say to what an extent in this country which is so courtly women are tyrannized by the laws. Should one be astonished that they so grievously avenge themselves through their morals?

position of a stubborn father. Such might they still be despite him, if one of the two received good counsel.

Julie's example and yours equally show that it is for the Spouses alone to judge whether they are suited to each other. If love does not prevail, reason alone will choose; this describes your own case; if love prevails nature has already chosen; this describes Julie's. Such is the sacred law of nature which man has not the right to transgress, which he never transgresses with impunity, and which consideration of station and rank cannot abrogate without its cost in misfortunes and crimes.

Although winter is approaching and I must go to Rome, I shall not leave the side of the friend I have under my watch, until I have seen his soul in a stable condition on which I can rely. It is a trust I hold dear for its own sake, and because you have placed it in my hands. If it is beyond my power to make him happy, I shall try at least to make him be prudent, and bear like a man the ills of mankind. I have decided to stay a fortnight here with him, during which time I hope we shall receive news of Julie and you, and that you both will help me somehow dress the wounds of this sick heart, who still can hear reason only through the organ of sentiment.

I enclose a letter for your friend: do not, I pray you, confide it to any messenger, but deliver it yourself.

Fragments

Enclosed in the previous letter

1. Why was I not able to see you before my departure? You feared I would expire in leaving you? piteous heart! take comfort. I am all right..... I am not suffering..... I am still alive..... I am thinking of you..... I think of the time when I was dear to you..... I am a bit downhearted..... the coach makes my head swim.... I feel dejected..... I will not be able to write you for long today. Tomorrow, perhaps I shall have more strength..... or will no longer need it.....

2. Where are these horses dragging me so fast? Where is this man who calls himself my friend taking me so zealously? Is it far from you, Julie? Is it at your behest? Is it to places where you are not?.... Ah, foolish maid..... I measure with my eyes the distance I so quickly cover. Where am I coming from? whither am I going? and why such haste? Do you fear, cruel friends, that I will not reach my doom soon enough? O friendship! O love! is this how you conspire? are these your favors?.....

3. Have you carefully consulted your heart, in dismissing me so brutally? Were you, tell me, Julie, were you able forever to give up..... No,

no, that tender heart loves me; I know it full well. In spite of fate, in spite of itself, it will love me to the grave.... I can see you have allowed yourself to be persuaded....* what endless repentance you lay up for yourself!.... Alas! it will be too late.... what, you could forget.... what, I could have so little known you!..... Ah, think of yourself, think of me, think of.... listen, there is still time.... you have heartlessly sent me away. I am fleeing faster than the wind..... Speak a word, a single word, and I shall return swifter than a flash. Speak a word, and we are forever united. We ought to be;..... we shall be..... Ah! the breeze carries my sighs away!..... and yet I am fleeing; I am going to live and die far from her.... live far from her!.....[8]

LETTER III

From Milord Edward to Julie

Your Cousin will give you news of your friend. I believe moreover that he is writing to you by this post.[9] First satisfy your eagerness on that score, and then read this letter calmly; for I assure you that its subject merits your full attention.

I know men: I have lived much in few years; I have acquired much experience at my own expense, and it is the path of passion that brought me to philosophy. But in all I have so far observed, I have seen nothing so extraordinary as you and your lover. It is not that either of you has a distinctive character whose particular traits can be categorized at first glance, and it may well be that it was this difficulty of defining you that led a superficial observer to consider you as common souls. But it is just that which distinguishes you: that it is impossible to distinguish you, and that the traits of the common model, at least one of which is lacking in every individual, shine equally in yours. In like manner each proof of an engraving has its particular flaws which make up its character, and if a single perfect one comes along, even though it seems fine at first glance, it cannot be recognized as such without long scrutiny.[10] The first time I saw your lover, I was struck by a new sentiment, which has but grown daily, as reason justified it. In your case, it was quite another matter, and that sentiment was so intense that I mistook its nature. It was not so much the difference of sex that produced this impression, as an even more marked character of perfection which the heart detects, even independently of love. I easily see what you would be without your friend; I do not see in the same way what

* The sequel makes clear that these suspicions fell on Milord Edward, and that Claire took them as referring to herself.

he would be without you; many men may resemble him, but there is but one Julie on earth. After an offense I shall never forgive myself, your letter came to enlighten me about my own sentiments. I instantly understood that I was not jealous nor for that reason in love; I understood that you were too lovable for me; you require the firstfruits of a soul, and mine would not be deserving of you.

From that moment on I took in your mutual happiness a tender interest that will never die. Thinking it would lift all the obstacles, I made an indiscreet overture to your father the ill success of which is a further reason to motivate my zeal. Pray listen to me, and I can still repair all the harm I have done you.

Probe your heart, O Julie, and see whether you can possibly put out the flame that consumes it? There was a time, perhaps, when you could have halted its progress; but if Julie pure and chaste has nonetheless succumbed, how shall she arise again after her fall? How will she resist a love that is triumphant, and armed with the dangerous image of all the pleasures past? Young lover, cease deceiving yourself, and abandon the confidence that seduced you: you are lost, if you must continue to struggle: you will be defiled and defeated, and the sentiment of your shame will little by little smother all your virtues. Love has too deeply infiltrated the fabric of your soul for you ever to have the power of driving it out; it deepens and penetrates all its lines like a corrosive acid; you will never efface its deep impression without effacing at the same time all the exquisite sentiments you received from nature,[11] and if a time comes when you have no love left, there will be nothing admirable left in you. What then can you do now, it being too late to change the state of your heart? One thing only, Julie, and that is to make it legitimate. For that I am about to propose the sole means you have remaining; take advantage of it, while there is still time; restore to innocence and virtue that sublime reason Heaven entrusted to you, or beware lest you defile forever the most precious of its gifts.

I hold in the Duchy of York a rather considerable estate, which was long my ancestors' home. The hall is old, but fine and comfortable; the surroundings are lonely, but agreeable and varied. The Ouse river[12] which flows at the park's confines provides both an enchanting vista and an easy outlet for commodities; the production of the land affords adequate provision for the master and could well double before his eyes. Hateful prejudice cannot reach this fortunate land. There the peaceful inhabitant still preserves the simple customs of the earliest times, and one can see in it the very image of the Valais described in such moving phrases by your friend's pen. This estate is yours, Julie, if you deign to inhabit it with him, and

there you can live out together the tender hopes that conclude the letter to which I refer.[13]

Come, unique model of true lovers; come, endearing and faithful couple, and take possession of a place made to serve as sanctuary to love and innocence. Come and confirm there, before Heaven and man, the sweet bond that unites you. Come honor with the example of your virtues a land where they will be worshipped, and simple folk disposed to imitate them. May you in this peaceful place forever enjoy in the sentiments that unite you the happiness of pure souls; may Heaven there bless your chaste flame with children who are like you; may you there prolong your lives in an honorable old age, and end them finally in your children's arms; may our posterity, surveying this monument of conjugal felicity with an inner enchantment, be stirred some day to utter: *This was the sanctuary of innocence; this was the abode of the two lovers*.

Your fate is in your hands, Julie; weigh carefully the proposal I am making you, and examine only its substance; for moreover, I take the responsibility of assuring your friend in advance and irrevocably of the commitment I am making; I also take responsibility for your safe departure, and for assuring along with him the safety of your person until your arrival. There you can with no obstacle be married publicly the moment you arrive; for among us a marriageable daughter has no need of someone else's permission to give herself away.[14] Our wise laws do not abrogate those of nature, and if some disadvantages result from this convenient arrangement, they are much less great than those it prevents. I left my Valet in Vevey, a trustworthy, reliable, prudent man, who is unfailingly loyal. You can easily concert with him by word of mouth or by letter with the help of Regianino, without his knowing what it is about. When the time comes, we will come to meet you, and you will leave your paternal household only when conducted by your Husband.

I leave you to your reflections; but I repeat, beware the error of prejudice and the seduction of scruples that often lead to vice via the path of honor. I foresee what will become of you if you reject my offers. The tyranny of an intractable father will draw you into the abyss you will measure only after falling in. Your extreme meekness sometimes dissolves into timidity: you will be sacrificed to the fantasy of station*; you will have to contract an engagement your heart will disavow. Public approval will be constantly contradicted by the outcry of your conscience; you will be honored and despicable. It is better to be forgotten and virtuous.

* The fantasy of station! And it is an English peer who says such things! And this is not supposed to be a fiction? Reader, what say you to this?

P. S. Uncertain as to what you will resolve, I write to you without our friend's knowledge, lest a refusal on your part instantly destroy all the benefit of my labors.

LETTER IV

From Julie to Claire

Oh, my dear! In what confusion you left me yesterday evening, and what a night I have spent dreaming about that fatal letter! No, never came a more dangerous temptation to beset my heart; never did I experience such turmoil, and never did I less perceive the means of putting it to rest. Formerly a certain light of wisdom and reason directed my will; in every problematic circumstance, I first discerned the more honorable choice, and made it immediately. Now defiled and ever defeated, I am merely floating amidst contrary passions: my feeble heart has a choice only among its faults, and such is my deplorable blindness that if I should chance to make the better choice, it is not virtue that will have guided me, and I shall have none the less remorse for it. You know what Husband my father destines for me; you know what fetters love has given me: shall I be virtuous? Obedience and faith dictate opposite duties to me. Shall I follow my heart's penchant? who is to be preferred of a lover or a father? Alas, by harkening to love or nature, I cannot avoid casting one or the other into despair; by sacrificing myself to duty I cannot avoid committing a crime, and whatever choice I make, I must die both unhappy and guilty.

Ah! Dear and tender friend, you who were ever my unique resource and who so many times saved me from death and despair, look upon the horrible condition of my soul today, and see whether your tender care was ever more needed! You know very well that your advice is heeded, you know that your counsels are followed, you have just seen at the price of my life's happiness that I know how to submit to lessons from friends. Therefore take pity on the despondency to which you have reduced me; continue, since you have begun; stand in for my dejected courage, think for her who no longer thinks except through you. After all, you read what is in this heart that loves you; you know it better than I do. Tell me therefore what I will, and choose for me, when I no longer have strength to will, nor reason with which to choose.

Read this generous Englishman's Letter twice; read it a thousand times, my Angel. Ah! Let yourself be stirred by the enchanting tableau of happiness that love, peace, and virtue still can offer me! Sweet and ecstatic union of souls! inexpressible delights, even in the bosom of remorse! Ye Gods!

What would these be to my heart in the bosom of conjugal fidelity? What! could happiness and innocence still be within my power? What, could I expire in love and joy surrounded by an adored husband and the cherished tokens of his tenderness!..... and I waver a single instant, and I do not fly to redeem my fault in the arms of the one who made me commit it? and I am not already a virtuous wife, and chaste materfamilias?..... Oh if only those who gave me life could see me emerge from my degradation! If they could witness the way I shall in turn fulfill the sacred duties they fulfilled on my behalf!..... and what of thine own? ungrateful, denatured daughter; who will fulfill those duties to them, while thou dost forget them? Is it by plunging the dagger into a mother's breast that thou preparest to become one thyself? Will she who dishonors her family teach her children to honor it? Worthy object of an adoring father's and mother's blind tenderness, abandon them to the regret of having brought you into this world; cover their old age in grief and shame..... and then savor, if thou canst, a happiness purchased at such a price.

Oh God! what horrors encompass me! to steal away from one's country; to dishonor one's family, to abandon together father, mother, friends, parents, and even you! and you, my sweet friend! and you, my heart's well-beloved! you from whom I have since childhood scarce been able to remain a single day apart; to flee you, leave you, lose you, never to see you again!..... ah, no! may I never..... what torments rend your unfortunate friend! she feels all together all the evils she has to choose from, without deriving any consolation from the blessings that will remain to her. Alas, I am losing my mind. So many struggles exceed my strength and derange my reason; I am losing both courage and sense. My only remaining hope is in you alone. Either choose or let me die.

LETTER V

Reply

Your indecision is only too well founded, my dear Julie; I foresaw it and failed to forestall it; I feel but cannot allay it; and what seems to me worst about your present condition is that no one but yourself can rescue you from it. When prudence is at issue, friendship comes to the aid of a troubled soul; if the choice is between good and evil, the passion that knows them only confusedly can defer to disinterested counsel. But here whichever decision you make, nature sanctions and condemns it, reason condemns and approves it; duty is either silent or in conflict with itself; the consequences are equally dreadful on both sides; you may neither re-

main undecided nor choose well; you have only sufferings to compare, and your heart alone is the judge. For my part, the importance of this deliberation appalls me and its effect saddens me. Whichever fate you elect, it will always be little worthy of you, and being able neither to indicate to you an option that is right for you, nor lead you to true happiness, I lack the courage to determine your destiny. This is the first refusal you ever received from your friend, and I can well sense from its cost to me that it will be the last; but I would betray you by trying to govern you in a situation where even reason recuses itself, and the only rule to follow is to harken to your own inclination.

Be not unfair to me, my sweet friend, and judge me not before it is time. I know that there are circumspect friends who, for fear of compromising themselves, refuse their counsel in difficult situations, and whose reserve grows with their friends' peril. Ah! You will soon see whether this heart that loves you knows such timid precautions! Allow me, rather than discussing your concerns, to discuss my own for a moment.

Have you never observed, my Angel, to what degree anyone who comes near you clings to you? For a father and mother to cherish their only daughter is not, I know, much to marvel at; for an ardent young man to catch fire for a fetching person is no more extraordinary; but for a man as cold as Monsieur de Wolmar[15] in the fullness of age to be stirred for the first time in his life upon seeing you; for a whole family to idolize you with one mind; for my father, such a stranger to sensibility, to cherish you as much as and perhaps more than his own children: for friends, acquaintances, domestics, neighbors, and a whole town to worship you all together and take the tenderest interest in you: that, my dear, is a less likely concurrence, one that would not take place unless there were some particular cause in your person. And do you know what that cause can be? It is neither your beauty, nor your wit, nor your grace, nor does it relate to what people call the gift for pleasing: but it is that tender soul and that ease of attachment which is unmatched; it is the gift of loving, my child, that makes you loved. People can resist anything, except kindness, and there is no surer means of acquiring the affection of others than to give them one's own. A thousand women are fairer than you; many have equal graces; you alone possess, along with your graces, something undefinably seductive that is not merely pleasing, but affecting, and attracts all hearts to yours. One senses that this tender heart asks nothing so much as to surrender itself, and the sweet sentiment it seeks, seeks it in return.

You are surprised, for example, to behold Milord Edward's unbelievable affection for your friend; you behold his zeal for your happiness; you wonder at the generous offers he makes you; you attribute them to virtue

alone, and my Julie melts! Wrong, doubly wrong, charming Cousin! God forbid I should belittle Milord Edward's kindnesses, nor underestimate his generous soul. But believe me, this zeal, however pure, would be less ardent if in the same circumstance it were addressed to other persons. It is your irresistible sway and your friend's[16] that, without Milord's even being aware of it, determines him with such force, and motivates him by attachment to do something he thinks is motivated only by honesty.[17]

This is bound to happen with all souls of a certain temper; they so to speak transform others into themselves; they have a sphere of activity within which nothing can resist them; one cannot know them without wanting to imitate them, and from their sublime elevation they attract unto themselves everyone about them. That is why, my dear, neither you nor your friend will perhaps ever understand mankind; for you will see men much more as you make them, than as they are in themselves. You will set the tone for everyone who keeps company with you; they will either flee you or come to resemble you, and all the things you will have seen will perhaps be unexampled elsewhere on earth.

Now let us come to me, Cousin; to me whom the same blood, same age, and above all a perfect conformity of taste and humors with opposite temperaments[18] has bound to you since childhood.

Congiunti eran gl'alberghi,
Ma piú congiunti i cori:
Conforme era l'etate,
Ma 'l pensier piú conforme.[19]

The houses were joined,
but the hearts even more;
the age was in conformity,
but the thought even more so.

What do you think has been the result of this bewitching influence that is exerted on everyone who comes near you on the person who has spent her life with you? Do you think there could be between us a merely ordinary unity? Do my eyes not reflect back the sweet joy I draw from yours every day our paths cross? Do you not read in my compassionate heart the pleasure of sharing your pains and weeping with you? Can I forget that in the first transports of a budding love, friendship did not encumber you, and that your lover's grumblings could not persuade you to separate me from you, and hide from me the spectacle of your weakness? That moment was critical, my Julie; I know the cost to your modest heart of admitting a shame that is not reciprocal. Never would I have been your confidante if I had been your friend only by half, and our souls have been too intimate in their unity for anything to be able henceforth to sever them.

What is it that makes friendships between women so lukewarm and short-lived, I mean between those who have the capacity to love? It is love interests; it is the empire of beauty; it is jealousy over conquests. Now if any of those could have divided us, the division would already have taken place; but even were my heart less ill-suited to love, even if I were unaware that your passions are of a kind that can die only with life itself, your lover is my friend, in other words my brother; and who ever saw genuine friendship end up in love? As for Monsieur d'Orbe, he assuredly will long be gratified by your sentiments for him before it will occur to me to complain of them, and I am no more tempted to hold him back forcibly than you are to snatch him from me. Ah, my child! Would to God that at the price of his attachment I could cure you of yours; I keep him with pleasure, I would yield him with joy.[20]

When it comes to good looks, I can pretend as much as I wish, you are not the kind to challenge me, and I am quite sure that in your whole life the thought of settling which of us is the prettier never entered your mind. I have not been altogether so indifferent; I know what I must think on that score, without feeling the least bit of spite. It even seems to me that I am more proud than jealous over it; for after all the charms of your face, not being those which would suit mine, do not diminish those I have, and I feel the more beautiful with your beauty, suave with your graces, adorned with your talents; I deck myself in all your perfections, and it is in you that I make the best possible investment of my †vanity. To be sure I would hardly enjoy being frightful on my own account, but I am pretty enough for the need I have of it. All the rest is useless to me, and I do not need to be humble to yield to you.

You are impatient to know what I am getting at. Here it is. I cannot give you the advice you ask, I have told you the reason why: but the choice you make for yourself, you will make at the same time for your Cousin, and whatever your destiny I am determined to share it. If you go, I follow; if you stay, I stay: I have made an unshakable resolution to do so, it is my duty, nothing can change my mind. My disastrous indulgence has caused your undoing; your fate must be mine, and since we were inseparable from childhood, my Julie, we must be until the grave.

You will find, I foresee, much foolishness in this design; but actually it is sounder than it seems, and I have not the same motives for hesitating as you. First, with regard to my family, if I leave behind a permissive father, I also leave behind a rather indifferent one, who lets his children do whatever they wish, more out of negligence than tenderness: for you know that European affairs occupy him much more than his own, and his daughter is much less close to his heart than is the Pragmatic.[21] Moreover, I am not

like you an only daughter, and with the children who remain, he will scarcely notice that one is missing.

I am walking away from a marriage about to be concluded? *Manco male*,[22] my dear; Monsieur d'Orbe, if he loves me, will just have to get over it. As for me, although I have high regard for his character, do not lack attachment for his person, and regret losing in him a most honorable man, he is nothing to me next to my Julie. Tell me, my child, does the soul have a sex? In truth, I cannot perceive one in mine. I may have fancies, but very little love. A husband can be helpful to me, but to me he will never be anything more than husband, and a husband is something which, still free and passable as I am, I can find anywhere in the world.

Mark my word, Cousin: although I do not hesitate, that does not mean you should not hesitate, nor that I mean to suggest you make the choice that I will make if you go. The difference between us is great and your duties are much more rigorous than mine. You also know that a nigh unexampled affection fills my heart, and so absorbs all other sentiments that it is as if they were obliterated. An invincible and sweet habit has attached me to you since my childhood; I love perfectly only you, and if I have some bonds to sever by following you, I shall take courage from your example. I shall say to myself, I am imitating Julie, and shall believe myself justified.

NOTE

From Julie to Claire

I hear you, incomparable friend, and I thank you. At least once I will have done my duty, and shall not be unworthy of you.[23]

LETTER VI

From Julie to Milord Edward

Your letter, Milord, stirs me to tears and admiration. The friend you are kind enough to protect will be no less grateful when he learns all you have tried to do for us. Alas! Only the afflicted can appreciate the value of charitable souls. We already know in only too many ways how precious is yours, and your heroic virtues will always move us, but they will no longer surprise us.

How lovely I would find it to be happy under the auspices of such a

generous friend, and receive from his beneficence the happiness fortune has denied me! But, Milord, in despair I perceive that fortune belies your kind designs; my cruel fate overpowers your zeal, and the sweet vision of the things you offer me only makes me feel their loss more acutely. You offer an agreeable and secure retreat to two persecuted lovers; there you make their flame legitimate, their union solemn, and I know that under your protection I would easily escape the pursuits of an irate family. That is a great deal for love, is it enough for felicity? No, if you want me to be at peace and content, offer me an even more secure sanctuary, where one can escape shame and regret. You anticipate our needs, and with unexampled generosity, in order to support us you deprive yourself of a part of the estate intended for your own support. Richer, more honored by your beneficence than by my own inheritance, in your country I can recover everything, and you will be good enough to stand me in stead of a father. Ah Milord! Will I be worthy of finding one, after deserting the one nature has given me?

Such is the source of the reproaches of a terrified conscience, and of the secret murmurs that rend my heart. The question is not whether I have the right to order my life against the will of those who gave it me, but whether I can do so without mortally aggrieving them, whether I can flee them without casting them into despair? Alas! One might as well deliberate whether I have the right to take their lives. Since when does virtue thus weigh the rights of blood and nature? Since when does a sensible heart so carefully mark the limits of gratitude? Are we not already guilty if we are prepared to go up to the point where guilt begins, and do we look so scrupulously for the boundary of our duties, unless we are tempted to cross it? Can it be me? Can I pitilessly desert those thanks to whom I breathe, who sustain the life they have given me, and make it dear to me; those who have no hope nor pleasure but in me alone? A father approaching sixty! a mother forever sickly! I, their only child; I, leave them helpless in the solitude and infirmities of old age, at a time when I should return to them the tender care they have lavished on me? I, sentence their last days to shame, to regrets, to tears? Anguish, the cry of my troubled conscience would forever depict to me my father and mother expiring without consolation, and cursing the thankless daughter who forsakes and dishonors them?[24] No, Milord, the virtue I abandoned abandons me in turn and speaks no more to my heart; but this horrible thought speaks to me instead, for my torment it would follow me every moment of my life, and make me miserable in the bosom of happiness. Finally, if such is my destiny that I must devote the rest of my life to regrets, this one alone is too awful to bear; I would rather confront all the others.

I cannot answer your reasons, I admit, and am only too disposed to find them good: but, Milord, you are not married: do you not sense that only a father can have the right to counsel the children of others? As for me, my decision is made; my parents will make me unhappy, I know it full well; but for me it will be less cruel to lament in my misfortune than to have caused theirs, and I shall never desert the paternal household. Go then, sweet fantasy of a sensible soul, felicity so enchanting and so desired, go, fade into the night of dreams, thou shalt have no more reality for me. And you, too generous friend, forget your gracious proposals, and may there remain no trace of them but in the depths of a heart too grateful to forget them. If the excess of our woes does not discourage your great soul, if your generous kindnesses are not yet exhausted, you still have the means of exercising them with glory, and he whom you honor with the name of friend can through your ministries deserve to become just that. Do not judge him by the condition in which you see him: his distraction results not from cowardice, but from a proud and ardent genius that stiffens against fortune. There is often more stupor than courage in apparent constancy; the ordinary man does not know violent pains, and great passions hardly take root in weak men. Alas! He has put into his constancy that energy of sentiments that characterizes noble souls, and therein lies today my shame and my despair. Do believe, Milord, that if he were but a common man, Julie would not have come to ruin.

No, no; that secret affection which preceded your enlightened esteem for him[25] has not misled you. He is worthy of everything you have done for him without knowing him well; you will do even more if possible, once you know him. Yes, be his consoler, his protector, his friend, his father, both for you and for him I beg you to; he will justify your confidence, he will honor your kindnesses, he will practice what you teach him, he will imitate your virtues, he will learn wisdom from you. Ah, Milord! If he becomes in your hands all that he can be, how proud some day you will be of your handiwork!

LETTER VII

From Julie[26]

You too, my sweet friend! You too, my heart's only hope, you come to pierce it once more while it expires in sadness![27] I was prepared for the blows of fortune, long forebodings had told me to expect them; I would have borne them patiently: but you for whom I suffer them! Ah, those I receive from you are alone unbearable, and it is horrible to see my pains

compounded by him who was supposed to make them dear to me. What sweet consolations had I promised myself, and how they fade with your courage! How often did I flatter myself that your strength would lift my languor, that your merit would undo my fault, that your virtues would revive my downcast soul. How often did I dry my bitter tears by saying to myself: I suffer for him, but he is worthy of it; I am criminal, but he is virtuous; a thousand troubles besiege me, but his constancy sustains me, and I find in the depths of his heart the compensation for all I have lost? Vain hope, demolished by the first trial! Where is now that sublime love that can exalt all sentiments and make virtue blossom forth? Where are those proud maxims? What has become of that imitation of great men? Where is that philosopher misfortune cannot shake, and who succumbs to the first incident that separates him from his mistress? What pretext shall henceforth justify my shame in my own eyes, when I no longer see anything in the man who seduced me, anything but a man wanting courage, weakened by pleasures, a cowardly heart defeated by the first setback, a madman who relinquishes reason just when he needs it? Oh God! In this consummate humiliation was I to see myself reduced to feeling as much shame for my choice as for my weakness?

See to what degree you are forgetting yourself; your distraught and grovelling soul descends to cruelty? you dare address reproaches to me? you dare complain of me?... of your Julie?... savage!...,[28] how could remorse have failed to hold back your hand? How could the sweetest tokens of the tenderest love there ever was leave you courage enough to offend me? Ah if you could doubt my heart how contemptible your own would be!... but no, you do not, you cannot doubt it, I can defy your fury to doubt it; and in this very moment when I detest your injustice, you see only too well the source of the first angry reaction I have ever experienced.

Can you turn against me, when I have brought myself to ruin out of blind confidence, and when my designs have not succeeded? How ashamed you would feel of your harsh words if you knew what hope had lured me, what plans I dared to contrive for your happiness and mine, and how they vanished away with all my expectations! Some day, I dare yet presume, you may know more about it, and your regrets will avenge me then for your reproaches. You know my father's injunction; you are not unaware of what people are saying; I foresaw the consequences, I had them put before you, you understood them as we had, and in order to preserve ourselves for each other we had to submit to the fate that separated us.

So I have dismissed you, as you dare to assert? But for whom have I done it, indelicate lover? Ingrate! for a heart far more honest than it thinks itself, and that would die a thousand times rather than see me debased. Tell

me, what will become of you when I have been abandoned to infamy? Can you expect to bear the spectacle of my dishonor? Come then, if you are cruel enough to believe that, come and accept the sacrifice of my reputation with as much courage as I manifest by offering it to you. Come, do not fear you will be disavowed by her to whom you were dear. I am ready to declare in the face of Heaven and men all that we have felt for each other; I am ready to name you aloud as my lover, and die in your arms of love and shame: I would rather the entire world knew of my affection than for you to doubt it for an instant, and your reproaches are more bitter to me than ignominy.

Let us end forever these mutual complaints, I beg you; they are unbearable to me. Oh God! how can people who love each other quarrel, and waste tormenting each other moments in which they so need consolation? No, my friend, why feign a dissatisfaction that does not exist? Let us complain of fate and not of love. Never did it create such a perfect union; never did it create one more lasting. Our souls too well fused can never again be separated, and we can no longer live apart, except as two parts of a whole. How then can you feel your sufferings only? How can you not feel your friend's? How can you not hear her tender laments in your breast? How much more painful they are than your angry outbursts! How much more cruel my woes would be to you, if you shared them, than even your own!

You think your fate pitiable! Consider your Julie's, and pity only her. Consider the situation of my Sex and yours in our common misfortunes, and decide which of us is the more to be pitied? To feign insensibility in the throes of passions; to appear joyous and content when a prey to a thousand woes; to have a serene appearance and a troubled soul; always to say something other than what one thinks; to disguise everything one feels; to be false for the sake of duty, and lie for the sake of modesty: such is the usual situation of any maiden my age. One's finest days are thus spent under the tyranny of propriety, which that of parents only compounds in the case of a mismatch. But it is in vain that our inclinations are countered; the heart takes orders only from itself; it evades slavery; it offers itself as it chooses. Under an iron yoke not imposed by Heaven only a body without the soul can be subjected: the person and her troth remain separately committed, and an unfortunate victim is forced into crime by being forced to fail on one side or the other in the sacred duty of fidelity. Are some more pure? Ah, that I know! They have not loved? How happy they are! They resist? I tried to resist. Are they more virtuous? Do they love virtue more? I would always have loved it, were it not for you, you alone. Is it then true that I no longer do?..... you have undone me, and it is I who console you!.... but me, what is to become of me?.... how feeble

are the consolations of friendship when those of love are lacking! who then will console me in my sufferings? What a horrible fate I see before me, who for having lived in crime see yet another crime in an odious and perhaps unavoidable union! Where shall I find enough tears to mourn my fault and my lover, if I yield? Where shall I find enough strength to resist, in my present dejection? I seem already to see the wrath of an angry father! I seem already to hear the cry of nature stir my innermost being, or the wail of love rend my heart! Deprived of you, I am left without resource, without support, without hope; the past debases me, the present afflicts me, the future horrifies me. I thought I was doing everything for our happiness, I have only made us more miserable by bringing about a more cruel separation. Vain pleasures are no more, remorse remains, and the shame that humiliates me knows no consolation.

It is my lot, my lot to be weak and unhappy. Let me weep and suffer; my tears can no more dry than my faults can right themselves, and even time which heals all offers me nothing but renewed cause for tears: but you who have no violence to fear, who are not debased by shame, who are in no way forced to disguise your sentiments cravenly; you who are affected only by our misfortune and who at least still possess your original virtues, how dare you degrade yourself to the point of sighing and wailing like a woman, and letting yourself be carried away like a raving fool? Is the contempt I have merited for your sake not enough, without exacerbating it by making yourself contemptible, and without burying me under both my infamy and yours? Summon back your nerve, learn to bear misfortune and be a man. Continue to be, if I dare say it, the lover Julie chose. Ah, if I am no longer worthy to spark your courage, remember, at least, what I once was; try to deserve my having given that up for you; do not dishonor me twice.

No, my respectable friend, it is not you I recognize in this effeminate letter which I want to forget forever and already consider you to have disavowed. I hope, debased, mortified as I am, I presume to hope that my memory does not inspire such base sentiments, that my image yet reigns with even greater glory in a heart I could once set afire, and that I will not have to reproach myself, along with my weakness, with the cowardice of the man who was its cause.

Fortunate in adversity, you find the most precious consolation known to sensible souls. In your misfortune Heaven provides you a friend, and gives you cause to wonder whether it is not giving you in return more than it takes away. Admire and cherish this too generous man who deigns at the price of his own peace of mind to watch over your life and your reason. How moved you would be if you knew all that he has been willing to

do for you! But why inspire your gratitude by sharpening your sufferings? You need not know how greatly he loves you to appreciate the extent of his worth, and you cannot respect him as he deserves, without loving him as you ought.

LETTER VIII

From Claire

You have more love than consideration, and are better at making sacrifices than at making them worth something. How can you possibly write to Julie with such a tone of reproach in her present condition, and just because you are suffering, must you turn on her who suffers even more? I have told you a thousand times, never in my life did I see a lover so scolding as you; for you, always ready to argue over everything, love is just a state of war, or if you are docile on occasion, it is so you can later complain that you were. Oh how such lovers are to be feared and how fortunate I count myself for never having wanted one if not of the sort one can dismiss at will, without it costing anyone a single tear!

Take it from me, change your language with Julie if you want her to live; it is too much for her to have to bear both her pain and your remonstrances. Learn once and for all to deal gently with this overly sensible heart; you owe her the tenderest consolations; take care lest you augment your woes by complaining too much of them, or complain at least only to me who am solely responsible for your departure. Yes, my Friend, you have guessed right; I suggested to her the decision required by her imperilled honor, or rather I forced her to make it by exaggerating the danger; I even decided for you, and each carried out his duty.[29] I went even further: I dissuaded her from accepting Milord Edward's offers; I stood in the way of your happiness, but Julie's is dearer to me than yours; I knew that she could not be happy after abandoning her parents to shame and despair, and it is hard for me to understand, even so far as you yourself are concerned, what happiness you could savor at the price of hers.

However that may be, such are my conduct and my wrongs, and since you enjoy quarrelling with those who love you, these are things for which you can blame only me; although that would not be less ungrateful, it would at least be less unjust. As for me, however you may treat me, I shall ever remain the same for you; you will be dear to me so long as Julie loves you, and I would say more if it were possible. I have no regret either for favoring or for opposing your love. The pure zeal of friendship which has always guided me justifies me equally for what I have done for and against

you, and if I sometimes took an interest in your passion, more perhaps than it seemed I ought to have, my heart is witness enough for my peace of mind; I shall never be ashamed of the services I was able to render my cousin, and I only blame myself for the fact that they were ineffectual.

I have not forgotten what you formerly taught me about the constancy of the wise man in time of adversity, and I could, I think, remind you of several relevant maxims; but Julie's example teaches me that a maiden of my age is for a philosopher of yours as poor a preceptor as dangerous a disciple, and it would ill befit me to try to teach lessons to my master.

LETTER IX

From Milord Edward to Julie

We have overcome, charming Julie; an error on our friend's part has restored him to reason.[30] The shame of having put himself momentarily in the wrong has dissipated all his fury, and rendered him so docile that from now on we shall do with him whatever we like. I am pleased to see that the fault he blames himself for leaves him more regret than spite, and I can tell he loves me, from the fact that he is humble and abashed in my presence, but not at all embarrassed nor reserved. He appreciates his injustice too much for me to bring it up, and wrongs thus owned do more honor to the one who sets them aright than to the one who forgives them.

I have taken advantage of this turnabout and of the effect it has produced to make several necessary arrangements with him, before we go our separate ways; for I can no longer defer my departure. As I intend to return next summer, we agreed that he would go await me in Paris, and we would then go together to England. London is the sole theater worthy of great talents, and where they find the broadest arena.*[31] His are in many ways superior, and I do not despair of seeing him, with the help of a few friends, make in little time progress worthy of this merit. I shall explain my views more in detail when I pass through your neighborhood. In the meantime you are aware that through success many difficulties can be

* This is a sign of remarkable prejudice in favor of his country; for I do not hear it said there is any on earth where in general foreigners are worse received, and find more obstacles to their advancement than in England. Because of the Nation's proclivities, foreigners there are in no way favored; because of the form of its government, they have no way of achieving anything. But let us concede as well that the Englishman hardly goes about asking others for the hospitality he denies them at home. In what Court other than that of London does one find these proud islanders basely grovelling? In what country but their own do they seek wealth? They are tough, it is true; but I do not find this toughness unpleasant when it goes hand in hand with justice. To me it is fine for them to be merely Englishmen, since they do not have to be men.

overcome, and that there are degrees of consideration that can compensate for birth, even in your father's mind. That, it seems to me, is the only expedient remaining to be tried for your happiness and his, since destiny and prejudice have deprived you of any others.

I have written to Regianino to come meet me by post-chaise, to take advantage of him for the eight or ten days I have yet to spend with our friend. His sadness is too profound to leave room for much conversation. Music will fill the voids of silence, allow him to dream, and little by little change his pain into melancholy. I await that state to turn him loose: I would not dare trust him until then. As for Regianino, I will leave him with you when I come through and will not collect him again until my return from Italy, at which time, judging by the progress you and your cousin have made, I think you will no longer need him. For the present, surely he is of no use to you, and I am not depriving you of anything by taking him away for a few days.

LETTER X

To Claire

Why must I finally open my eyes fully upon myself? Would I had closed them forever, rather than behold the abjection into which I have fallen; rather than find myself the lowest of men, after being the most favored? Sweet and generous friend, who were so often my refuge, I venture once more to pour out my shame and my grief in your compassionate heart; I venture once more to implore your consolation against the sentiment of my own indignity; I venture to appeal to you when I cannot find myself. Heaven, how could such a despicable man have been loved by her, or how could a flame so divine have failed to purify my soul? How ashamed she must now be of her choice, she whom I am no longer worthy to name! How she must grieve to see her image profaned in a heart so grovelling and so base! What disdain and hatred she owes to the man who could love her and prove nothing but a coward! Know all my errors, charming Cousin*; know my crime and my repentance; be my Judge and condemn me to death; or be my intercessor, and may the beloved one who decides my fate deign once more to be its arbiter.

I shall not describe to you the effect this unanticipated separation produced in me; I will tell you nothing of my painful stupor and my insane despair: you will gauge it well enough from the inconceivable distraction

* Like Julie, he called her, my Cousin; and like Julie, Claire called him, my friend.

to which they both led me. The more I sensed the horror of my condition, the less I imagined it could be possible to relinquish Julie willingly; and the bitterness of that sentiment, coupled with Milord Edward's astonishing generosity, gave rise to suspicions I shall never recall without horror, and which I cannot forget without ingratitude toward the friend who forgives me them.

Recapitulating in my delirium all the circumstances of my departure, I thought I detected a premeditated design, and I had the gall to impute it to the most virtuous of men. Scarcely had this horrible doubt entered my mind than it seemed to me that everything confirmed it. Milord's conversation with the Baron d'Étange; the uningratiating tone I accused him of having adopted then; the quarrel that stemmed from it; the order not to see me; the decision to send me away; the swiftness and secrecy of the preparations; the conversation he had with me the day before; even the dispatch with which I was not so much taken off as absconded with; all this seemed to me to prove a willful design on Milord's part to get me away from Julie, and what I knew of his planned return to her side was all my mind needed to identify the purpose of his ministries. Yet I resolved to inform myself even further before making a scene, and with this in mind I confined myself to examining things more closely. But everything fed my ridiculous suspicions, and every last act of kindness in my favor that humane zeal moved him to became to my blind jealousy evidence of betrayal. At Besançon I learned that he had written to Julie, though he neither showed me his letter nor mentioned it to me. I judged then that I was adequately convinced, and awaited only the reply, which I hoped of course would disappoint him, in order to have with him the explanation I was contemplating.

Last evening we came in rather late, and I learned that there was a parcel from Switzerland, of which he said nothing when we separated. I left him time to open it; from my room I heard him mutter several words as he read. I listened attentively. Ah Julie! he was saying in broken sentences, I wanted to make you happy..... I respect your virtue.... but I pity your error..... Hearing these words and others of the sort which I made out perfectly, I could no longer control myself; I took my sword under my arm; I opened, or rather broke open the door; I went in as if I were raving mad. No, I will besmirch neither this paper nor your eyes with the insults my rage dictated to incite him into duelling with me on the spot.

O my Cousin! This was the occasion that revealed to me more than any other the empire of genuine wisdom, even over men of the greatest sensibility, when they are willing to hear its voice. At first he could understand nothing of what I was saying, and took it for a true delirium: but the be-

3. Ah, young Man! to your Benefactor!
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

trayal of which I was accusing him, the secret designs for which I was reproaching him, that letter of Julie's which he was still holding and which I continued to invoke,[32] finally gave him to understand the subject of my fury. He smiled; then he said to me coldly: You have lost your mind, and I do not duel with a madman. Open your eyes, blind man that you are, he added in a softer voice, is it really me you are accusing of betraying you?[33] Somehow the way he said this struck me as inconsistent with disloyalty; the sound of his voice stirred my heart; I had no sooner cast my eyes on his than all my suspicions were dispelled, and I began to view my aberration with alarm.

He instantly noticed this change; he extended his hand. Come, he said to me, if your return to your senses had not preceded my justification, I would have refused ever to see you again. Now that you are reasonable, read this letter, and know your friends once and for all. At first I resisted reading it; but the sway that so many advantages gave him over me led him to insist on it with a tone of authority which, despite my umbrage which was now dispelled, my secret desire only too much seconded.

Imagine the state I found myself in after reading this letter, which informed me of the unheard-of favors of the man I dared to revile so unworthily. I fell to his feet, and my heart filled with admiration, regrets, and shame, I embraced his knees with all my strength, unable to utter a single word. He received my repentance as he had received my insults, and required as the price of the forgiveness he deigned to grant me only that I should never oppose anything he intended to do for me. Ah let him do whatever he pleases from now on! his sublime soul is above that of men, and it is no more permissible to resist his favors than those of the deity.

Next he gave me the two letters addressed to me,[34] which he had not wanted to give me before reading his own, and being informed of your Cousin's decision. I saw by reading them what a lover and what a friend Heaven has given me; I saw how many sentiments and virtues it has gathered about me to make my remorse more bitter and my degradation more contemptible. Tell me, who is then this unique mortal whose least empire lies in her beauty, and who, just like the eternal powers, makes us worship her for both the good and evil things she does? Alas! she has cruelly robbed me of everything, and I love her the more for it. The more unhappy she makes me, the more perfect I find her. It is as if all the torments she causes me were just another merit in my eyes. The sacrifice she has just made to the sentiments of nature dismays and enthralls me; it raises in my eyes the value of the one she has made to love. No, her heart can refuse nothing without at the same time enhancing whatever it grants.

And you, worthy and charming Cousin; you unique and perfect model

of friendship, who will be cited alone among all women,[35] and whom hearts not resembling yours will dare to call imaginary: ah speak to me no more of philosophy! I despise that misleading display consisting in nothing but empty words; that phantom that is nothing but a wisp, that incites us to defy passions from a distance and leaves us like an empty braggart when they get closer. Pray do not abandon me to my distractions; pray restore your former kindnesses to this unfortunate who no longer deserves them, but desires them more ardently and needs them more than ever; pray recall me to myself, and may your gentle voice compensate in this sick heart for that of reason.

No, I have not, I dare hope, fallen into perpetual abjection. I feel the pure and sacred flame that burned in me reviving; the example of so many virtues will not be wasted on him on whom they were lavished, who loves them, admires them, and desires ever to imitate them. O dear lover whose choice I must honor! O my friends whose esteem I desire to recover! my soul awakens and rediscovers in yours its strength and life. Chaste love and sublime friendship will restore to me the courage of which a craven despair was about to deprive me; the pure sentiments of my heart will stand me in stead of wisdom; through you I shall be all that I should be, and I will force you to forget my fall, if I can only get back on my feet for a moment. I know not, nor wish to know, what fate Heaven has in store for me; whatever it might be, I desire to become worthy of the one I have enjoyed. That immortal image I carry within me will serve as my shield, and make my soul invulnerable to the blows of fortune. Have I not lived enough for my happiness? Now it is for her glory that I must live. Ah, would I could astound the world with my virtues so that some day they might say with admiration: Could he do less? He was loved by Julie!

P. S. An odious and *perhaps unavoidable* union![36] What do these words mean? They are in her letter. Claire, I am prepared for anything; I am resigned, ready to bear my fate. But those words.... never, whatever happens, will I leave this place until I have received an explanation of those words.

LETTER XI

From Julie

So it is true that my soul is not foreclosed to pleasure, and it still has room for a sentiment of joy? Alas, I thought since your departure that I had become sensible only to pain; I thought I knew only how to suffer far

from you, and did not even imagine there could be any consolation for your absence. Your charming Letter to my Cousin has come to disabuse me; I have read it and kissed it with tears of tenderness; it has poured the coolness of a gentle dew on my heart desiccated with troubles and withered with sorrow, and I have sensed from the serenity it has left in me that you have no less sway from afar than near over your Julie's affections.

My friend! How enchanting for me to see you recover that vigor of sentiment befitting a man's courage! I shall esteem you the more for it, and despise myself less for not having totally defiled the dignity of an honest love, nor corrupted two hearts at once. I shall tell you more, now that we can speak more freely of our business; what deepened my despair was to see that yours was costing us the only resource we might still have, in the use of your talents. You now know the worthy friend Heaven has given you: your whole lifetime would not be too much for deserving his generosity; it will never be enough for undoing the offense that you have just done him, and I hope you will need no further lesson to restrain your fiery imagination. It is under this respectable man's auspices that you are about to enter the world; it is supported by his credit, guided by his experience that you are about to try avenging neglected merit for the harshness of adversity. Do for him what you would not do for yourself, at least try to honor his kindnesses by insuring that they are not futile. See what a rosy outlook is still afforded you; what success you should expect in a career in which everything conspires to favor your zeal.[37] Heaven has showered gifts upon you; your own favorable disposition cultivated by your taste has endowed you with every talent; not yet twenty-four, you possess the graces of your age together with the maturity that later on consoles for the advance in years;

Frutto senile in su'l giovenil fiore.[38]

Old fruit on a young flower.

Study has not dulled your vivacity, nor weighed down your person: insipid gallantry has not shrunk your mind, nor stultified your reason. Ardent love by inspiring in you all the sublime sentiments it engenders has given you that elevation of thought and refinement of sense* from which it is inseparable. In its gentle warmth, I have seen your soul unfold its brilliant faculties, as a flower opens up to the rays of the sun: you possess at the same time all that leads one to fortune and all that makes one scorn it. All that stood between you and the world's honors was that you should

* Refinement of sense inseparable from love? My good Julie, in your own love such refinement is not conspicuous here.

deign to seek them, and I hope that an object dearer to your heart will give you the zeal for them which they do not deserve.

O my sweet friend, you are going far from me?..... O my beloved, you are going to flee your Julie?..... it must be so; we must separate if we wish to meet again in happiness some day, and the outcome of the efforts you are about to undertake is our last hope. May so cherished a thought inspire you, console you during this long and bitter separation! May it give you that ardor which surmounts obstacles and tames fortune! Alas, the world and business will be continual distractions for you, and will create a useful diversion for the pains of absence! But I am going to remain left to myself alone or abandoned to persecutions, and everything will force me to miss you constantly. Happy still if vain anxieties did not compound my real torments, and if in addition to my own woes I did not also experience all those to which you are going to expose yourself!

I shudder when I think of a thousand kinds of danger your life and morals will incur. I have in you all the confidence a man can inspire; but since fate separates us, oh my friend, why are you but a man? How much guidance you must need in that unknown world you are about to enter! It is not for me, younger, inexperienced, having studied and reflected less than you, to give you advice on that score; that is a concern I leave to Milord Edward. I merely recommend to you two things, because they relate more to sentiment than to experience, and because although I know little of the world, I think I know your heart well: never forsake virtue, and never forget your Julie.

I shall not remind you of all those subtle arguments you yourself taught me to scorn, which fill so many books and have never made an honorable man. Ah! those sad reasoners! What sweet ecstasies their hearts have never felt nor given! My friend, leave aside those vain moralists, and search your soul; it is there you will always rediscover the source of that sacred fire that so often kindled in us with the love of sublime virtues; it is there you will find that timeless effigy of the truly beautiful the sight of which inspires us with a holy enthusiasm, and which our passions constantly sully but can never destroy.*[39] Remember the delightful tears that flowed from our eyes, the throbs that choked our pounding hearts, the transports that raised us above ourselves, at the story of those heroic lives that make vice inexcusable and constitute the honor of mankind.[40] Do you want to know which, of fortune or virtue, is truly desirable? Remember which the heart prefers when its choice is impartial. Remember where interest leads us

* The genuine philosophy of Lovers is Plato's; while its spell lasts they never have any other. A man who is prey to emotion cannot do without this philosopher; a cold reader cannot abide him.

when we read history. Did it ever occur to you to desire the treasures of Cresus, or the glory of Caesar, or the power of Nero, or the pleasures of Heliogabalus?[41] Wherefore, if they were happy, did your desires not put you in their place? It is because they were not and you knew it quite well; it is because they were vile and despicable, and a happy, evil man inspires envy in no one. So what men did you then read about with the greatest pleasure? Whose examples did you admire? Which ones would you most have wanted to be like? Inexplicable enchantment of beauty that never perishes! There was the Athenian drinking the Hemlock,[42] there was Brutus dying for his country,[43] there was Regulus amidst torments,[44] there was Cato ripping out his own entrails[45]: you envied all these virtuous unfortunates, and felt in your heart the real felicity hiding behind their apparent calamities. Do not believe that this sentiment was yours alone; it is what all men feel, and often despite themselves. That divine model which each of us carries within himself enthralls us whether we will it or not; as soon as passion allows us to perceive it, we want to be like it, and if the most evil of men could be someone other than himself, he would wish to be a man of honor.

Forgive me these transports, my gentle friend; you know they originated with you, and it is for the love I got them from to give them back to you. It is not my intention here to be teaching you your own maxims, but to apply them briefly to you, to see what use they might be to you: for now is the time to practice your own lessons, and show how what you put so well into words is to be enacted. Although the question is not to become a Cato or a Regulus, still everyone must love his country, be forthright and courageous, keep his faith, even at the cost of his life. Private virtues are often all the more sublime for not aspiring to the approval of others but only to the good witness of the self, and the just man has his conscience instead of universal acclaim. You will sense then that the greatness of man belongs to all stations, and that none can be happy if he does not enjoy his own esteem; for if the soul's truest delight lies in the contemplation of the beautiful, how can the evil man love it in another without being forced to hate himself?

I do not fear that the senses and vulgar pleasures will corrupt you. They are hardly dangerous traps for a sensible heart, for that it takes more delicate ones: but I fear the maxims and lessons of the world; I fear that terrible influence that the universal and general example of vice must exert; I fear the clever sophisms in which it cloaks itself: I fear, finally, lest your heart itself deceive you, and make you less particular about the means of acquiring a consideration that you would know how to disdain were it not that our union could result from it.

I alert you, my friend, to these dangers; your wisdom will do the rest; for the ability to foresee them goes a long way toward preventing them. I will simply add one thought which in my opinion carries the argument over the false reason of vice, over the arrogant errors of fools, and which should be sufficient to guide the life of the wise man toward the good. For the source of happiness lies neither entirely in the desired object nor in the heart that possesses it, but in the relation of the one to the other, and, just as all the objects of our desires are not of a kind that can create felicity, all states of the heart are not of a kind that can experience it. If the purest soul does not alone suffice for its own happiness, it is even more certain that all the delights on earth could not produce happiness in a depraved heart; for in both instances there is a preparation necessary, a certain combination of which the result is that precious sentiment sought after by every sensible being, and always unknown to the false sage who contents himself with the pleasure of a moment for want of knowing enduring happiness. What would it then avail to acquire one of these advantages at the expense of the other, to gain on the outside only to lose even more on the inside, and acquire the means of being happy while losing the art of putting them to use? Is it not still better, if we cannot have them both, to sacrifice the one that fate can restore to us to the one we cannot recover once we have lost it? Who should know better than I, who have only poisoned the joys of my life in the belief I was consummating them? So let the wicked talk, who display their fortune and hide their hearts, and be sure that if there is a single example of happiness on earth, you will find it in a man of honor. You received from Heaven that happy inclination for all that is good and honest; harken to nothing but your own desires, follow nothing but your natural inclinations; remember above all the time of our first love. As long as those pure and delightful moments recur to your memory, you cannot possibly cease to love what made them so sweet to you, nor can the charm of the morally beautiful fade in your soul, nor could you ever wish to obtain your Julie by means unworthy of you. How can something be enjoyed if the taste for it has been lost? No, in order to possess what we love, we must keep the same heart that has loved it.

Now I come to my second point, for you see I have not forgotten my profession.[46] My friend, it is possible without love to possess the sublime sentiments of a strong soul: but a love such as ours inspires and sustains the soul as long as it burns; as soon as it goes out the soul lapses into languor, and a worn-out heart is no longer good for anything. Tell me, what would we be if we no longer loved? Ah! Would it not be better to cease to be than to exist without feeling anything, and could you bring yourself to endure on earth the insipid life of a common man after tasting of every

transport that can ravish a human soul? You are going to live in large cities, where your looks and your age even more than your merit will set a thousand traps for your fidelity. Insinuating coquetry will feign the language of tenderness, and please you without deceiving you; you will seek not love, but pleasures; you will taste them dissociated from it and will not recognize them. I do not know whether you will find Julie's heart elsewhere, but I defy you ever again to find in someone else's company what you felt in hers. The exhaustion of your soul will betoken the fate I have predicted for you; sorrow and tedium will overwhelm you in the midst of frivolous amusements. The memory of our first love will pursue you despite yourself. My image a hundred times lovelier than I ever was will suddenly come to you unawares. Instantly the veil of distaste will cover all your pleasures, and a thousand bitter regrets will arise in your heart. My beloved, my sweet friend! Oh, if ever you forget me.... alas! I will merely die of it; but you will live on vile and miserable, and I shall die too well avenged.

Therefore never forget her, that Julie who once was yours, and whose heart shall not belong to others. I can say no more given the dependency in which Heaven has placed me: but having recommended that you be faithful, it is fair to leave you the only token of my own faithfulness that lies within my power. I have consulted, not my duties, my distraught mind no longer knows them, but my heart, the last rule of someone who is no longer able to obey rules; and here is the result of its inspirations. I will never marry you without my father's consent; but I will never marry another without your consent. I give you my word, it will be sacred come what may, and no human power can force me to betray it. Be therefore without worry about what may befall me in your absence. Go, my gentle friend, seek under the auspices of tender love a fate worthy of crowning it. My destiny is in your hands insofar as it has been mine to determine, and it will never change except by your leave.

LETTER XII

To Julie

O qual fiamma di gloria, d'onore,
Scorrer sento per tutte le vene,
Alma grande parlando con te![47]

Oh what a flame of glory, of honor,
I feel coursing through all my veins,
great soul, when I speak with thee.

Julie, let me breathe. You set my blood a-boil; you make me start, you make me throb. Your letter burns like your heart with the sacred love of

virtue, and you transfer to the depths of my heart its celestial fire. But why so many exhortations when only orders were needed? Be sure that if I forget myself to the point of requiring reasons for doing what is right, it is not from you: your will alone is enough for me. Are you not aware that I shall always be whatever you wish, and would even do wrong before I could disobey you. Aye, I would have burned the Capitol[48] had you commanded me to, because I love you more than all things; but do you know why I love you so? Ah! Incomparable maid! It is because you can will nothing that is not honest, and love of virtue makes the love I have for your charms more invincible.

I depart, encouraged by the commitment you have just made. You could have spared yourself the indirection; for is a promise to belong to no one without my consent, not a promise to belong to none but me? For my part, I say it more freely, and give you today my pledge of honor which shall not be violated: I know not what fate fortune calls me to in the career I shall undertake at your behest; but never shall a bond of love or matrimony unite me with any other than Julie d'Étange; I live, I exist only for her, and shall die free or her spouse. Farewell, time is pressing and I depart this very moment.

LETTER XIII

To Julie

I arrived last evening in Paris, and he who could not live two streets from you is now more than a hundred leagues away. O Julie! pity me, pity your unhappy friend. Had I traced that endless road in long streams of my blood, it would have seemed less long to me, and I would not have felt my soul falter in greater languor. Ah if only I knew the moment that is to reunite us as well as the space that separates us, I would offset the leagues of distance with the progress of time, and in each day subtracted from my life I would count the steps that would have brought me closer to you! But this path of pain is engulfed in the gloom of the future: the end that is to limit it eludes my feeble sight. O doubt! O torture! My anxious heart looks for you and finds nothing. The sun rises and no longer brings me back the hope of seeing you; it sets and I have not seen you: my days devoid of pleasure and joy flow into a long night. In vain do I wish to rekindle spent hope in me, it offers me but a precarious resource and dubious consolations. Dear and tender friend of my heart, alas! what woes must I anticipate, if they are to equal my earlier happiness?

Let not this sadness alarm you, I implore you, it is only the passing

effect of solitude and the reflections of the journey. Do not fear a repetition of my earlier lapses; my heart is in your hand, my Julie, and since you sustain it, it will no longer allow itself be discouraged. One of the consoling thoughts that are the fruit of your last letter is that I now find myself carried forward by a double strength, and were love to have destroyed my own I would only have gained from that; for the courage I derive from you sustains me much better than I could have sustained myself. I am convinced it is not good that man should be alone.[49] Human souls need to be coupled to realize their full value, and the combined force of friends, like that of the blades of an artificial magnet, is incomparably greater than the sum of their individual forces.[50] Divine friendship, such is thy triumph! But what is friendship alone compared with that perfect union which to all the energy of friendship adds bonds a hundred times more sacred? Where are those coarse men who mistake the transports of love for nothing but a fever of the senses, a desire of debased nature? Let them come, let them observe, let them feel what is taking place in the depths of my heart; let them see an unhappy lover estranged from his beloved, in doubt whether he will ever see her again, without hope of recovering his lost felicity; and yet fired by those immortal flames that he drew from your eyes and that your sublime sentiments have fed, ready to defy fortune, suffer its setbacks, even to see himself deprived of you, and ready to make of the virtues you have inspired in him the worthy ornament of that adorable imprint that will never fade from his soul. Julie, ah what would I have been without you? Cold reason would have enlightened me, perhaps; a tepid admirer of the good, I would at least have loved it in others. I shall do more; I shall know how to practice it with zeal, and imbued with your wise lessons, I shall one day make those who have known us say: Oh what men we all would be, if the world were full of Julies and of hearts that knew how to love them!

While meditating along the way on your last letter, I have decided to assemble a collection of all the ones you have written to me, now that I can no longer receive your advice by mouth.[51] Although there is not one of them I do not know by heart, and well by heart, you can believe that; I nonetheless love to reread them constantly, were it only to behold once more the writing of that dear hand which alone can give me happiness. But gradually the paper wears thin, and before they are torn I want to copy them all into an album which I have just chosen expressly for this. It is rather thick, but I am thinking of the future, and I hope not to die young enough to confine myself to this volume. I reserve my evenings for this delightful occupation, and shall work at it slowly in order to make it last. I shall never be without this precious collection; it will be my handbook in

the world I am about to enter; it will be for me the antidote to the maxims one breathes there; it will comfort me in my sufferings; it will avert or correct my mistakes; it will instruct me during my youth, it will edify me in all seasons, and these will be in my opinion the first love letters to have been used in this way.

As to the last one which I now have before my eyes; as beautiful as it seems to me, yet I find one passage in it to suppress. A very strange verdict indeed; but what must appear even stranger, is that this passage is precisely the one that concerns you, and I reproach you for even dreaming of writing it. How can you talk to me about fidelity, about constancy? Formerly you knew better my love and your power. Ah Julie! Are the sentiments you inspire perishable, and even if I had promised you nothing, could I ever cease being yours? No, no, from your eyes' first glance, from your mouth's first word, from my heart's first transport there was kindled within it that everlasting flame which nothing can ever more extinguish. Had I beheld you but that first instant, the damage was already done, it was too late ever to forget you. And I could forget you now? Now that, drunk with my former happiness, I can still experience it through its memory alone? Now that, made breathless by the force of your charms, I breathe only through them? Now that my first soul has disappeared, and I am quickened by the one you have given me? Now, O Julie, that I detest myself for expressing so poorly everything I feel?[52] Ah! Let all the beauties in creation try to seduce me! is there another beauty than yours in my eyes? Let everything conspire to pluck it from my heart; let them pierce it, flay it, let them break this faithful mirror of Julie, her pure image will never cease to shine even in the smallest fragment; nothing can destroy it. No, not even the supreme power could achieve that; it can obliterate my soul, but not make it cease worshipping you as long as it exists.

Milord Edward has taken it on himself to give you on his way back an account of what concerns me and his schemes to help me: but I fear he will ill fulfill this promise with respect to his present arrangements. Be apprised that he presumes to take advantage of the right his favors give him over me, to extend them even beyond what is proper. I find myself, thanks to an annuity which, left to himself, he would have made irrevocable, in a position to cut a figure well above my birth, and that is what I may be required to do in London to carry out his intentions. But here, as I have no business obligations, I shall continue to live in my own way, and shall not be tempted to use what exceeds my upkeep on vain expenditures. You have taught me this, my Julie, the primary needs, or at least the most obvious ones, are those of a beneficent heart, and as long as there is someone who lacks necessities, what honorable man has any surplus?[53]

LETTER XIV
To Julie

I*[54] enter with a secret horror into this vast desert of the world.[55] This chaos presents me with nothing but horrible solitude, wherein reigns a dull silence. My beleaguered soul seeks for expansion, and everywhere finds itself hemmed in. I am never less alone than when I am alone, said an Ancient,[56] I on the other hand am alone only in the crowd, where I can be neither with you nor with the others. My heart would like to speak, it senses it is not being heard. It would like to answer; nothing that is being said can reach it. I do not understand the country's language, and no one here understands mine.[57]

Not that I am not showered with greetings, civilities, kindnesses, and not that I do not attract a thousand officious marks of attention. But it is precisely to this that I object. How is one supposed to be all of a sudden the friend of someone one has never met? The honest interest of mankind, the simple and touching outpouring of a candid soul, speak a language very different from the false demonstrations of politeness, and the deceitful outward appearances which the ways of the world require.[58] I greatly fear that the man who at first sight treats me like a friend of twenty years would treat me twenty years later as a stranger if I had some important favor to ask of him; and when I see such dissolute men take such a tender interest in so many people, I would readily conclude that they take none in anyone.

Yet there is a certain reality in all that; for the Frenchman is naturally good, open, hospitable, beneficent; but there are also a thousand manners of speaking that must not be taken literally, a thousand apparent offers, that are made only so as to be declined, a thousand kinds of traps that politeness sets for rustic good faith. Never did I hear so oft repeated: count on me when you need me; help yourself to my name, my purse, my house, my carriage. If all this were sincere and were taken at face value, no People would be less attached to property, the community of ownership would be

* Without anticipating the Reader's judgment and Julie's about these narrations, I think I can say that if I had to make them and did not make them better, I would at least make them different. On several occasions I have been on the verge of removing them and substituting some of my own; ultimately I am leaving them in, and pride myself on my courage. I tell myself that a young man of twenty-four entering the world must not see it as does a man of fifty, whose experience has taught him to know it only too well. Further I tell myself that although I did not play a major role in the world, nonetheless I am no longer in a position to speak of it impartially. Let us then leave these Letters as they are. Let the shopworn commonplaces remain; let the trivial observations remain; all that is of little consequence. But, it matters to the friend of truth that to very the end of his life his passions not sully his writings.

nearly established here, the richest would constantly be offering, and the poorest forever taking, all would naturally arrive at the same level, and Sparta itself would have had less equal distributions than one would find in Paris. Instead of that, this is perhaps of all the cities on earth the one where fortunes are most unequal, and where the most sumptuous opulence and the most deplorable misery prevail at one and the same time. More is hardly needed to understand the meaning of this apparent commiseration which always seems to anticipate others' needs, and this facile tenderness of heart which in a moment's time contracts everlasting friendships.[59]

Instead of all these dubious sentiments and this deceitful confidence, do I wish to find enlightenment and instruction? Their amiable source is here, and one is delighted from the start with the knowledge and reason to be found in discussion, not only with Scholars and men of Letters,[60] but with men of all conditions and even with women: the tone of conversation here is easy and natural; it is neither ponderous nor frivolous; it is knowledgeable but not pedantic, gay but not boisterous, polite but not affected, gallant but not mawkish, bantering but not tasteless. One encounters neither dissertations nor epigrams[61]; they reason without arguing; they joke without punning, they artfully combine humor and reason, maxims and witticisms, sharp satire, shrewd flattery, and moral austerity. They talk about everything so everyone will have something to say; they do not explore questions deeply, for fear of becoming tedious, they propose them as if in passing, deal with them rapidly, precision leads to elegance; each states his opinion and supports it in few words; no one vehemently attacks someone else's, no one tenaciously defends his own; they discuss for enlightenment, stop before the dispute begins; everyone is instructed, everyone is entertained, all go away contented, and from these discussions even the wise man can take home with him matters worthy of silent contemplation.[62]

But what do you think one actually learns from such charming conversations? To be a sober judge of things of the world? to make good use of society, to know at least those whose company one keeps? Nothing of that, my Julie. One learns to plead artfully the cause of the lie, to unsettle with much philosophy all the principles of virtue, to color one's passions and prejudices with subtle sophisms, and to lend to error a certain stylish turn in keeping with the maxims of the day. It is not necessary to know people's character, but only their interests, to make a fair guess about what they will say on every subject. When a man speaks, it is, so to say, his attire and not he that expresses its sentiment, and he will change it without ado as often as he does his condition. Give him by turns a long wig, a uniform, and a pectoral cross; you will hear him preach in succession and with the

same zeal law, despotism, and inquisition. There is a form of reason proper to the robe, another to finance, another to the sword.[63] Each demonstrates quite easily that the other two are wrong, an easy conclusion to draw for all three.* Thus no one ever says what he thinks, but what it suits him to make others think, and in them never is apparent zeal for truth anything other than the mask of self-interest.

You would think that isolated individuals who are independent would at least have a mind of their own; not at all: just more machines that do not think, and are made to think with springs.[64] You have only to inquire into their assemblies, their coteries, their friends, the women they frequent, the authors they know: on this basis you can determine in advance their future sentiment on a book about to appear and which they have not read, on a play about to be performed and which they have not seen, on such and such an author they do not know, on such and such a system of which they have no notion. And just as the clock is ordinarily wound for twenty-four hours only, all those people go out every evening to learn in their assemblies what they will think the next day.

There are thus a small number of men and women who think for all the others and for whom all the others speak and act, and as each person is mindful of his own interest, no one of the common good, and as individual interests are always at odds with each other, there is a perpetual clash of cliques and factions, an ebb and flow of prejudices, conflicting opinions, in which those who are most excited, cheered on by the others, almost never know what it is all about. Each coterie has its rules, its judgments, its principles which are not countenanced elsewhere. The honorable man in one house is a knave in the neighbor's. The good, the bad, the beautiful, the ugly, truth, virtue have but a local and circumscribed existence. Whoever likes to get around and frequents several assemblies must be more versatile than Alcibiades, change principles as he does gatherings, modify his mind, so to speak, at each step, and measure his maxims by the fathom.[65] At each visit he must leave his soul at the door, if he has one; don one bearing the colors of the house, as a lackey dons his livery, doff it when he leaves and put his own back on if he so desires until his next changeover.[66]

There is more; for everyone puts himself constantly in contradiction with himself, without it occurring to anyone to find this wrong. They have principles for conversation and others for practice; the contrast scandal-

* We must allow this reasoning to a Swiss who sees his country very well governed, without any of these three professions being established there. How is that! Can the State subsist without defenders? No, the State must have defenders; but all the Citizens must be soldiers by duty, none by profession. Among the Romans and Greeks the same men were Officers in the Camp, magistrates in the city, and never were these two functions better acquitted than when these odd prejudices of estate which separate and dishonor them were unknown.

izes no one, and it is agreed that there should be no resemblance between them. It is not even required of an Author, especially of a moralist, that he speak as his books do, nor that he act as he speaks. His Writings, his words, his conduct are three utterly different things, which he is not obliged to reconcile. In a word, everything is absurd and nothing shocks, because they are accustomed to it, and there is even in such inconsequence a sort of stylish appearance in which many people take pride. Indeed, although all preach zealously the maxims of their profession, all make a point of adopting the tone of a different one. The Jurist's airs are cavalier, the Financier's are lordly, the Bishop talks like a rogue, the Courtier discusses philosophy, the Statesman discusses wit; even the mere craftsman incapable of assuming a tone other than his own dresses in black on Sundays, to look like a man of the Palace.[67] Only the military, disdaining all the other estates, unabashedly retain the tone of their own and are insufferable in good faith. Not that Monsieur de Muralt was wrong when he gave the preference to their Society[68]; but what was true in his time no longer is today. The progress of literary culture has changed the general tone for the better; only the military did not wish to change theirs, which, formerly the best, has at length become the worst.*[69]

Thus the men to whom you are speaking are not the ones with whom you converse; their sentiments do not emanate from the heart, their perceptions are not in their minds, their words do not represent their thoughts, all you see of them is their shape, and being in a gathering is about like standing before a moving tableau,[70] where the detached Spectator is the only creature moving under his own power.

Such is the notion I have conceived of high society based on what I have seen in Paris. This notion is perhaps more relative to my particular situation than to the actual state of things, and will doubtless be revised upon further information. Moreover, I frequent only those assemblies into which Milord Edward's friends have introduced me, and I am convinced that one must descend into other estates in order to learn the true manners of a country, for those of the rich are almost everywhere the same. I shall try to enlighten myself better in days to come. In the meanwhile, judge whether I am right to call this multitude a desert, and to be frightened by a solitude in which I find but a vain appearance of sentiments and truth that changes form at every instant and vanishes, in which I perceive but larvae and phantoms that catch the eye for a moment, and disappear

* This judgment, true or false, can only apply to Subalterns, and to those who do not live in Paris: for all the great names in the Kingdom are in the service, and even the Court is entirely military. But there is a great difference, when it comes to the manners contracted, between conducting a campaign in wartime, and spending one's life in garrisons.

the moment you want to capture them? So far I have seen many masks; when shall I see men's faces?[71]

LETTER XV

From Julie

Aye, my friend, we shall be united in spite of our estrangement; we shall be happy in spite of fate. It is the union of hearts that provides their true felicity; their attraction knows not the law of distances,[72] and our hearts would touch at opposite ends of the earth. I find, as you, that lovers have a thousand ways to allay the sentiment of absence, and to come close to each other in a moment's time. Sometimes they even see each other more often than when they used to see each other every day; for as soon as one of the two is alone, instantly they are both together. If you taste this pleasure every evening, I taste it a hundred times a day; I keep more to myself; I am surrounded by traces of you, and could not possibly rest my eyes on the objects around me without seeing you everywhere.

Qui cantò dolcemente, e qui s'assise,
Qui si rivolse, et qui rattenne il passo,
Qui co' begli occhi mi trafise il core;
Qui disse una parola, e qui sorrise.

Here she sang sweetly and here sat down;
here she turned around and here she held back her step;
here with her lovely eyes she transfixed my heart;
here she said a word, here she smiled.[73]

But you, are you capable of contenting yourself with these peaceful situations? of savoring a placid and tender love that communes with the heart without stirring the senses, and are your regrets today more chaste than your desires were formerly? The tone of your first letter[74] makes me tremble. I dread these equivocal excesses, all the more dangerous because the imagination that excites them is limitless, and I fear you may profane your Julie by loving her too much. Ah you do not sense, no, your indelicate heart does not sense what offense love takes at a vain homage; you forget that your life belongs to me and that a man often rushes to his death believing that he is serving nature.[75] Sensual man, will you never know how to love? Remember, oh remember that sentiment so calm and sweet you once knew and described in a tone so touching and tender. Given that it is the most delightful sentiment that requited love has ever savored, it is the only one admissible for separated lovers, and anyone who has been privi-

leged to taste it for a moment must not long for any other kind. I remember the reflections we used to make when reading your Plutarch, about a depraved taste that outrages nature.[76] If the only objection to its sorry pleasures were that they are not shared, that would be enough, we used to say, to render them insipid and despicable. Let us apply the same notion to the errors of an overactive imagination, it will not be less pertinent. Wretch! What are you enjoying when you take your enjoyment alone? These solitary pleasures of the senses are dead ones. O love! Thine are alive, it is the union of souls that animates them, and the pleasure given to the loved one heightens the pleasure received in return.

Pray tell me, my dear friend, in what language or rather in what jargon is the narration in your latest Letter? Might it not by chance be an instance of wit? If your design is to use it with me often, you really should send me the dictionary. What, pray, is the sentiment of a man's attire? A soul one dons like a livery? Maxims measured by the fathom?[77] What do you expect a poor Swiss woman to understand by these sublime figures? Rather than donning souls as others do in keeping to the house colors, are you not trying already to lend to your wit the hue of the country's? Take care, my good friend, I am afraid it will not look good against that background. In your opinion did Cavalier Marini's *traslati*,[78] which you have so often mocked, ever approach these metaphors, and if one can make a man's attire express an opinion in a letter, why could one not make fire sweat* in a sonnet?[79]

To observe in three weeks all the assemblies of a large city; to specify the character of their conversations, distinguish accurately in them the true from the false, the real from the apparent, and what they say from what they think; this is what the French are accused of doing sometimes among other peoples, but a foreigner is not supposed to do among them; for they are well worth studying deliberately. Nor do I approve speaking ill of a country where one is staying and being treated well: I would rather a man allow himself to be deceived by appearances than moralize at the expense of his hosts. Finally, any observer who prides himself on wit seems suspect to me: I am always afraid that he will innocently sacrifice the truth of things to the glint of his thoughts and play on his sentence at the expense of justice.

You are not unaware, my friend, that wit, as our Muralt says, is the Frenchmen's mania,[80] you seem to me inclined to the same mania, except that in their case it has grace, and it is to us of all the peoples on earth that it is least well suited. There is affectation and play in several of your letters.

* *Sudate, o fochi, a preparar metalli*. (Sweat, ye fires, to prepare the metals.): Verse of a sonnet by the cavalier Marin.

I am not referring to the vivid turn and vigorous phrases inspired by the force of sentiment; I refer to that prettiness of style which, being unnatural, comes spontaneously to no one, and is the mark of pretention in its user. O Lord! pretensions with a loved one! is it not rather in the loved one that they should be placed, and do we not ourselves take pride in the degree to which the other's merit surpasses our own? No, though one may enliven indifferent conversations with a few witticisms that fly past like darts, such language between two lovers is inappropriate, and the florid jargon of gallantry is much further removed from sentiment than the simplest tone one knows how to assume. I appeal to your own testimony. Did wit ever have time to manifest itself when we were alone together, and if the enchantment of a passionate conversation excludes it and prevents it from making an appearance, how could Letters, which absence always fills with a touch of bitterness and where the heart speaks more affectingly, ever tolerate it? Although every great passion is grave, and excessive joy itself provokes tears rather than laughter, I do not for all that intend that love be always sad; but I do intend that its gaiety be simple, unembellished, artless, naked like itself; in a word, that it glitter with its own graces and not with the baubles of wit.

The Inseparable, in whose room I am writing this Letter, claims that as I began it I was in that state of playfulness that love inspires or tolerates; but I do not know what became of it. As I progressed, a certain languor came over my soul, and left me scarcely the strength to write down the insults the wicked cousin wanted to address to you: for I should warn you that the critique of your critique was much more her doing than mine; she dictated to me in particular the first passage laughing madly, and not allowing me to make any changes. She says it is to teach you to show disrespect to her protégé Marini of whom you make sport.

But do you know what puts both of us in such good humor? It is her imminent wedding. The contract was signed last evening, and the day is set for Monday week. If ever love was merry, it is assuredly hers; never in a lifetime has one seen a maiden so hilariously in love. That nice Monsieur d'Orbe, who also is giddy over it, is delighted at such a frolicsome welcome. Less difficult to please than you used to be, he lends himself with pleasure to pleasantry, and considers the art of cheering his mistress a masterpiece of love. As for her, it is no use remonstrating, reminding her of propriety, telling her that so near the date she should adopt a more serious and grave demeanor, and show a bit more respect for the condition she is about to relinquish. She calls all that foolish nonsense, and maintains to Monsieur d'Orbe's face that the day of the ceremony she will be in the best possible humor, and that one really cannot go too gaily to a wedding. But

the devious little thing does not tell the whole; this morning I found her with reddened eyes; and I quite wager that the night's tears are paying for the day's laughter. She is going to enter into new bonds which will slacken the sweet ties of friendship; she will begin a style of living unlike the one she cherished; she was content and tranquil, she is going to risk all the hazards to which one is exposed in the best of marriages, and whatever she may say, just as a pure and calm body of water begins to grow murky as a storm approaches, her timid and chaste heart cannot contemplate without some alarm the imminent change in her fate.

O my friend, how happy they are! They love each other; they are going to marry; they will savor their love without obstacles, without fears, without remorse! Farewell, farewell, I can say no more.

P. S. We have seen Milord Edward for only an instant, so eager was he to get on with his journey. My heart filled with all our debt to him, I wanted to express to him my sentiments and yours; but a kind of shame prevented me. In truth, it is an insult to a man like him to thank him for anything.

LETTER XVI

To Julie

How impetuous passions make children out of men! How readily a frantic love feeds on fantasies, and how easy it is to decoy intense desires with the most frivolous objects! I have received your letter with the same transports your presence would have evoked, and in the exaltation of my joy a mere piece of paper stood me in stead of you. One of the worst things about absence, and the only one over which reason has no power, is anxiety over the present situation of the beloved. Her health, life, peace of mind, love, all is beyond the reach of the one who fears losing all; he is no more sure of the present than of the future, and all possible accidents are constantly played out in the mind of a lover who dreads them. At last I breathe, I live, you are well, you love me, or rather all that was true ten days ago; but who can give me assurance for today? O absence! O torment! O singular and baneful condition, when one can savor only the moment past, and the present has not yet come to be!

Even if you had not mentioned the Inseparable, I would have recognized her malice in the critique of my narration, and her spite in the apology of Marini; but if I were permitted to make my own, I would not remain speechless.

First of all, my Cousin (for it is to her I must reply): as to the style, I

adopted that of the subject; I tried to give you at one and the same time the notion and an instance of the tone of fashionable conversations, and in keeping with an ancient precept, I wrote to you more or less in the way they speak in certain circles. Moreover, it is not for using figures, but for their choice that I fault the Cavalier Marin.[81] However little heat one's mind may contain, metaphors and figurative expressions are needed to make oneself understood. Even your letters are full of them without your realizing it, and I maintain that only a geometrist and a dunce can speak without figures. Indeed, cannot a single judgment take on a hundred different degrees of force? And how does one determine which of these degrees it should have, if not by the turn one gives to it? My own sentences make me laugh, I admit, and I find them absurd, thanks to the trouble you took to isolate them; but leave them where I put them, and you will find them clear and even energetic. If those sharp eyes, with which you know how to express so much, were separated from each other, and from your face, Cousin, what do you think they would express with all their fire? My word, nothing at all; not even to Monsieur d'Orbe.

Is not the first thing that calls for observation upon arriving in a country, the general tone of Society? Well, that is also the first thing I observed in this one, and I related to you what they say in Paris and not what they do. If I pointed out a contrast between speech, sentiment, and the actions of honest people, it is because the contrast is immediately obvious. When I see the same men change maxims according to the Coteries, with Molinists in the one, Jansenists in the other,[82] vile courtiers at a Minister's, mutinous rebels at the home of a malcontent; when I see a gilt-up man decry luxury, a financier taxes, a prelate unruliness; when I hear a woman of the Court discuss modesty, a great Lord virtue, an author simplicity, an Abbé Religion,[83] and these absurdities shock no one, ought I not immediately conclude that there is no more concern there with hearing the truth than with uttering it, and that far from intending to persuade others when addressing them, a man does not attempt even to make them think he believes what he is saying?

But enough with teasing the Cousin. I leave aside a tone that is foreign to all three of us, and I hope that you will no more see me develop a taste for Satire than for wit. It is now to you, Julie, that I must reply; for I can distinguish playful criticism from serious reproaches.

I cannot conceive how both of you could have mistaken my objective. It is not the French I set out to observe: for if the character of nations can be determined only by their differences, how would I who know no others undertake to depict this one? Nor would I be so misguided as to choose the Capital for the site of my observations. I am not ignorant of the fact

that Capitals differ less among themselves than do Peoples, and that in them national characters are largely muted and merged, as much from the common influence of the Courts, which are all alike, as from the general effect of populous and crowded society, which is about the same on all men, and finally dominates the original character.

If I meant to study a people, I would go observe them in the remote provinces where the inhabitants are still in possession of their natural inclinations. I would slowly and carefully survey several of these provinces, the furthest removed from each other; all the differences I would observe among them would give me the specific genius of each; whatever they had in common, and other people did not have, would constitute the national genius, and what could be found everywhere would appertain to mankind in general. But I have neither that vast design nor the experience necessary to carry it out. My objective is to get to know man, and my method is to study him in his several relations. I have seen him so far only in small societies, scattered and nearly isolated on the earth's surface. Now I am about to consider him heaped up by multitudes in the same places, and I shall begin to judge thereby the true effects of Society; for were it averred that it makes men better, the more populous and concentrated it is, the better they must be, and morals, for example, will be far purer in Paris than in the Valais; and if one found the contrary, an opposite consequence would have to be drawn.

This method could still, I concede, lead me to an understanding of Peoples, but by a path so long and so devious that in my whole lifetime I would perhaps never be in a position to pronounce on any of them. I must begin by observing everything in the first one I find myself in; that I then specify the differences, as I survey more countries; that I compare France to each of them, as one describes the olive tree in comparison to a willow or the palm tree in comparison to the fir, and that I wait before judging the first people observed until I have observed them all.

Be so kind therefore, my charming preacher, as to make a distinction here between philosophical observation and national satire. It is not Parisians I am studying, but the inhabitants of a large city, and for all I know what I see of it fits Rome and London just as well as Paris. The rules of morality do not depend on the customs of Peoples; thus despite the reigning prejudices I can very well sense what is evil of itself; but I do not know whether this evil should be attributed to the Frenchman or to man, and whether it is the work of custom or nature. In every place the tableau of vice offends an impartial eye, and it is no more reprehensible to reprove it in a country where it prevails, even though one happens to be there, than to point out the flaws of mankind, even though one lives among men. Am

I not myself at present an inhabitant of Paris? Perhaps I too have contributed unknowingly to the disorder I observe here; perhaps too long a stay here would corrupt even my will; perhaps after a year I would be nothing more than a bourgeois, if in order to be worthy of you I did not retain the soul of a free man and the morals of a Citizen. Let me therefore depict for you without constraint objects I would be ashamed to resemble, and incite myself to the pure zeal for truth by the tableau of flattery and lies.

If I were master of my occupations and my fate, have no doubt I would manage to choose different subjects for my Letters, and you were not displeased with those I wrote you from Meillerie and the Valais: but, dear friend, in order to find strength to bear the turmoil of the world in which I am forced to live, I must at least console myself by describing it to you, and let the idea of preparing relations for you incite me to look for subject matter. Otherwise discouragement will catch up with me at every step, and I will have to abandon everything if you do not want to see anything with me. Remember that in order to live in a manner so unsuited to my taste I am making an effort not unworthy of its cause, and in order to judge which concerns may lead me to you, suffer me to discuss with you on occasion the maxims one must know and the obstacles one must overcome.

In spite of my slowness, in spite of my inevitable distractions, my collection[84] was finished when your letter happily came to extend it, and seeing how short it is I wonder at the number of things your heart managed to say to me in so little space. No, I maintain that there is no reading so delightful, even for someone who did not know you, if he had a soul like ours: but how could anyone not know you in reading your letters? How could anyone lend so touching a tone and such tender sentiments to a face other than yours? Does not one at each sentence see the sweet look in your eyes? At each word hear your charming voice? Who other than Julie has ever lived, thought, spoken, acted, written like her? Do not then be surprised if your letters which depict you so well sometimes have the same effect on your worshipful lover as your presence. Rereading them I lose my reason, my mind drifts into a continual delirium, a raging fire consumes me, my blood takes fire and sizzles, I am seized with frenzy. I imagine I see you, touch you, hold you to my breast.... object of worship, bewitching maid, source of delight and ecstasy, how could anyone seeing you not see the houris[85] awaiting the blessed?.... oh come to me!.... I can feel her.... she escapes me, and I embrace but a shadow.... It is true, dear Friend, you are too lovely and you were too tender for my faint heart; it is unable to forget your beauty or your caresses; your charms triumph over absence, they pursue me everywhere, they make me dread being alone, and my crowning misery is not to dare occupy myself constantly with you.

So they will be united despite the obstacles, or rather they are already at the moment I write this. Amiable and worthy Spouses! May Heaven crown them with the happiness that their wise and peaceful love, the innocence of their morals, the honesty of their souls deserve! May it afford them that precious happiness of which it is so chary with hearts made to savor it! How happy they will be, if it grants them, alas, everything it denies us! And yet do you not feel some sort of comfort in our woes? Do you not feel also that the excess of our misery is not without redemption either, and that if they have pleasures that are denied us, we also have some they cannot know? Yes, my sweet friend, in spite of absence, privations, alarms, in spite of despair itself, the potent projections of two hearts toward each other always possess a secret ecstasy unknown to placid souls. One of the miracles of love is to make us find pleasure in suffering, and we would regard as the worst of misfortunes a state of indifference and forgetfulness that would take away all the sentiment of our pains. Let us then bemoan our fate, O Julie! but envy no one's. Perhaps there is not, all things considered, an existence preferable to ours, and as the deity draws all its happiness from itself, so hearts warmed by a celestial fire find in their own sentiments a sort of pure and delightful ecstasy, independent of fortune and the rest of creation.

LETTER XVII

To Julie

Finally, here I am in the midst of the stream. My album completed, I have begun to attend the theater and have supper in town. I spend my entire day in society, I lend my ears and eyes to everything that strikes them, and perceiving nothing that is like you, I collect myself amidst the noise and converse secretly with you. Not that this noisy and tumultuous life is not somehow appealing and that the prodigious diversity does not offer certain attractions to people newly disembarked; but to feel them one would need an empty heart and a frivolous mind; love and reason seem to conspire to make them distasteful to me: since all is but vain appearance and everything changes at every moment, I have no time to be moved by anything, nor to examine anything.

Thus I am beginning to see the difficulties of studying the world, and I do not even know what vantage point I must adopt to know it well. The philosopher is too far away, the man of the world too close. The one takes in too much to be able to reflect, the other too little to evaluate the overall tableau. The philosopher studies separately every object that attracts his at-

tention, and being unable to discern either the connections or the relations with other objects outside his ken, he never sees it in its place and grasps neither its reason nor its true effects. The man of the world takes in everything and has time to reflect on nothing. The mobility of objects only allows him to perceive objects and not to observe them; they rapidly cancel each other, and leave him nothing but blurry impressions of the whole which resemble chaos.

Neither can one see and contemplate by turns, because the spectacle demands a continuity of attention that interrupts reflection. A man who tried to divide his time by intervals between the world and solitude, ever agitated in his retreat and ever a stranger in the world, would be nowhere at ease. He would have no other means than to divide his entire life into two broad areas, the one for seeing, and the other for reflecting: but even this is practically impossible; for reason is not an item one can put down and pick up again at will, and anyone who has managed to live ten years without thinking will never think again.

It also seems to me that it is folly to try to study the world as a mere spectator. He who pretends simply to observe observes nothing, because being useless in business and out of place in pleasures, he is nowhere welcome. One sees others acting only insofar as one acts oneself; in the school of the world as in the school of love, one has to begin by practicing what one wants to learn.

Which option then shall I elect, I a foreigner who can have no business in this country, and whom the difference of religion alone would bar from the right to aspire to anything?[86] I am reduced to stooping in order to learn, and unable ever to be a useful man, to trying to turn into an entertaining one. I am working as hard as I can at becoming polite without falseness, obliging without abasement, and acquiring so well what is good in society that it can suffer me without my adopting its vices. Any idle man who wants to see the world must acquire its manners at least up to a certain point; for by what right would a man demand acceptance among people to whom he is useless, and whom he does not know the art of pleasing? But also, once he has found that art, nothing more is asked of him, especially if he is a foreigner. He can dispense with taking part in claques, intrigues, quarrels; if he behaves honorably toward every man, and if he gives certain women neither exclusion nor preference, if he keeps the secret of each circle where he is received, if he does not display in one house the idiosyncrasies of another, if he avoids everything confidential, if he stays away from chicanery, if he maintains everywhere a certain dignity, he can peaceably see the world, preserve his morals, his probity, even his candor, provided it comes from a free spirit and not from a partisan one. This

is what I have tried to do thanks to the advice of a few enlightened people whom I chose to guide me among the acquaintances passed on to me by Milord Edward. I have thus begun to be received in less numerous and more selective circles. Up until now I had been only to regular dinners[87] where the only woman you see is the mistress of the house, where all the idle of Paris are received provided they be known, where each one pays for his dinner as he can in wit or flattery, and where the noise and hubbub differ little from the common tables at inns.

I am now initiated into more secret mysteries. I attend suppers by invitation where the door is closed to those who drop by and one is sure to find only people who are all congenial, if not to each other, at least to those who are hosting them. Here women are less restrained, and one can begin to study them; here subtler and more satirical remarks more peaceably prevail; here instead of public news, the theater, promotions, deaths, marriages that were the talk of the town that morning, the guests discretely review the gossip of Paris, reveal all the secret events of the chronicle of scandal, render good and evil equally amusing and ridiculous, and each participant by depicting people's characters artfully and according to the individual interest, unwittingly depicts his own even better; here a remnant of circumspection leads them in the presence of their lackeys to invent a certain tangled language, beneath which while pretending to render the satire more obscure they only make it more bitter; here, in a word, they carefully hone the dagger, under the pretext of inflicting less pain, but in fact in order to drive it in deeper.

However to consider these remarks in accordance with our ideas, it would be a mistake to call them satirical; for they are much more mocking than cutting, and come down less hard on vice than on the ridiculous. In general satire is not much practiced in large cities, where what is merely evil is so obvious that it isn't worth mentioning. What remains to be censured where virtue is no longer esteemed, and what could they vilify when they no longer think ill of anything? In Paris especially, where things are grasped only by their amusing side, anything that ought to provoke anger and indignation is always ill received if it is not put into song or epigram. Pretty women do not like to get cross, so nothing makes them cross; they like to laugh, and inasmuch as there is nothing to laugh about in crime, knaves are honest people like everyone else; but woe to the person who leaves himself open to ridicule, its caustic brand is indelible; it flays not only morals and virtue, it stigmatizes even vice: it makes them slander the wicked. But let us return to our suppers.

What has most struck me in these elite circles is to see six persons who are chosen expressly to converse agreeably together, and among whom

secret liaisons even most often abound, not be able to remain an hour amongst the six of them without bringing in half of Paris, as if their hearts had nothing to say to each other and there were no one there worthy of interest. Do you recall, my Julie, how when supping at your Cousin's or at your house, we knew, despite constraint and secrecy, how to make the conversation fall onto subjects having some relation to us, and how at each endearing reflection, at each subtle allusion, a glance quicker than a flash, a sigh rather intuited than perceived, ferried its sweet sentiment from one heart to the other?

If the conversation turns by chance on the guests, it is generally in a certain societal jargon which cannot be understood without possession of the key.[88] With the help of the code, you can exchange a thousand sorry jests in the fashion of the times, during which the stupidest person is not the one who least shines, whereas an uninformed third party is reduced to boredom and silence, or to laughing at what he does not understand.[89] With the exception of trysts, in which I do not and never shall engage, that comprises all the tenderness and affection to be found in the liaisons of this country.

If in the midst of all this a weighty man puts forward a grave remark or brings up a serious question, immediately the common attention is fixed on this new topic; men, women, old, young, all contribute to considering it from every viewpoint, and one is astonished at the sense and reason that come pouring out of all these giddy heads.*[90] A point of morality would not be better discussed in a circle of philosophers than in the circle of a pretty Parisian woman; their conclusions would even be often less severe; for the philosopher who intends to act as he speaks, looks twice to what he says; but here where all morality is pure verbiage, one can be austere without consequence, and one would not be displeased, the better to knock philosophical arrogance down a notch, to place virtue so high that even the wise could not attain it. Moreover, men and women, everyone, instructed by the experience of the world and above all by their conscience, gather together to think as ill of their species as possible, ever philosophizing grimly, ever degrading human nature out of vanity, ever seeking in some vice the cause of everything good that is done, ever speaking ill of man's heart, on the model of their own.

Despite this debasing doctrine, one of the favorite subjects of these peaceful discussions is sentiment: a word by which one must not under-

* Provided, however, that an unexpected pleasantry doesn't interfere and upset this gravity; for then everyone tries to outdo the others; that is the end of it, and there is no resuming a serious tone. I remember a certain package of *gimblettes* that so amusingly upset a performance at the fair. The interrupted actors were merely animals; but what *gimblettes* are to some people! We know whom Fontenelle was intending to depict in the story of the Tyrinthians.

stand an affectionate outpouring in the bosom of love or friendship; that would be insufferably dull. It is sentiment couched in grand, general maxims and quintessenced by all that is most subtle in metaphysics. I can say I have never in my life heard so much talk about sentiment, nor so little understood what was being said about it. These are inconceivable refinements. O Julie, our crude hearts have never known anything of all these beautiful maxims, and I fear sentiment among people of the world is like Homer among the Pedants, who forge for him a thousand fanciful beauties, for failing to perceiving the true ones.[91] Thus they expend all their sentiment in wit, and so much of it is breathed out in talk that there remains none for practice. Happily, decorum makes up for it, and one does for habit's sake approximately the same things one would do for sensibility's sake, at least so long as all it costs is formulas and some passing constraint one submits to in order to be well spoken of; for when the sacrifices go so far as to constrain for too long or cost too dearly, farewell sentiment; decorum does not demand it to that extreme. With that exception, it is unbelievable how regulated, measured, weighed everything is in what they call etiquette; whatever is no longer in the sentiments, they have put into rules, and with them everything is rules. If this people of followers were full of original characters it would be impossible to know about it; for no man dares to be himself. *One must do as the others do*, is the primary maxim of wisdom in this country. *That is done, that is not done*. This is the supreme pronouncement.

This apparent adherence to rules lends to common customs the most comical appearance imaginable, even in the most serious things. They know precisely when to send for news, when to get the porter to record that you called, that is to say, pay a visit without doing so; when one should pay a visit in person; when one can properly be at home; when one must not be at home even though one is; which offers of service one must make; which ones the other must refuse; what degree of sadness to adopt at such and such a death,* how much time to mourn in the country; the day when one can return for consolation to the city; the hour and minute when affliction allows one to give a ball or go to the theater. Here everyone does the same thing in the same circumstance: everyone moves in time like the marches of a regiment in battle order: you would say that they are so many marionettes nailed to the same plank, or pulled by the same string.

Now as it is not possible for all these people who do exactly the same

* To grieve at someone's death is a sentiment of humanity and the sign of a good disposition, but not a duty of virtue, were even that someone our Father. Whoever in this situation has no affliction in his heart should therefore show none on the outside; for it is much more essential to eschew falseness than to submit to propriety.

thing to be affected in exactly the same way, it is clear that one must figure them out by other means in order to know them; it is clear that all that jargon is but a vacuous list of formulas and gives an idea less of the manners than of the tone that prevails in Paris. Thus you learn the things that are said but nothing that can help you evaluate them. I can say the same for most new writings; the same even for the Stage which since Molière has been much more a place for reciting pretty conversations than the representation of civic life. There are three playhouses here, in two of which they represent fantastical beings, that is to say in one Arlequins, Pantaloons, Scaramouches[92]; in the other Gods, devils, sorcerers.[93] In the third they perform those immortal plays of which the reading used to give us such pleasure, and other, newer ones that appear from time to time on the stage.[94] Several of these plays are tragic but hardly moving, and if some natural sentiments and some true relation to the human heart can be found in them, they offer no kind of instruction as to the manners peculiar to the nation they entertain.

The institution of tragedy had, for its inventors, a religious grounding that was enough to justify it. Moreover, it offered the Greeks an instructive and agreeable spectacle taken from the woes of their enemies the Persians, from the crimes and follies of the Kings this people had rid itself of. Should the former tyranny of the house of Austria be represented in Berne, in Zurich, in the Hague, the love of fatherland and of freedom will make these plays interesting; but tell me what use are Corneille's tragedies here, and what interest Pompey or Sertorius[95] hold for the people of Paris? Greek tragedies hung upon real events or ones reputed to be real by the audience and founded on historical traditions. But what is an heroic and pure flame doing in the heart of the Mighty? Would one not conclude that struggles of love and virtue often trouble their sleep, and that the heart enters much into the marriages of Kings? I leave you to judge the verisimilitude and utility of so many plays, which all hang on this fanciful subject!

As for comedy, to be sure it must represent straightforwardly the manners of the nation for whom it is destined, so that that people might thereby get rid of its vices and flaws,[96] as before a mirror one removes the spots on one's face. Terence and Plautus were mistaken in their object; but before them Aristophanes and Menander had presented Athenian manners to the Athenians, and since then, Molière alone depicted even more honestly those of the French of the last century to their own eyes. The Tableau has changed; but no painter[97] has returned. Now the theater copies the conversations of a hundred or so Paris households. Besides that, you learn nothing there of French manners. In this large city there are five or six hundred thousand souls about whom nothing passes onto the Stage. Mo-

lière dared to paint bourgeois and craftsmen as well as Marquis; Socrates made coachmen, carpenters, shoemakers, masons talk. But today's Authors, who are so superior, would think themselves dishonored if they knew what transpires at a Merchant's counter or in a worker's shop; they can have nothing but illustrious interlocutors, and strive to achieve through the rank of their characters an elevation that their genius is incapable of providing. Even the public has become so finicky that they would fear compromising themselves at the Comedy as they would in their visits, and would not deign to go see a representation of people of lesser condition than themselves. It is as if they were the only inhabitants on earth; everyone else is nothing in their eyes. To have a Carriage, a Swiss, a butler, is to be like everybody. In order to be like everybody you have to be like very few people. Those who go on foot do not belong to high society; they are Bourgeois, common men, people from another world, and one could say that a carriage is necessary not so much to be driven places as to exist. Thus there are a handful of impertinents who count only themselves in the whole universe and are hardly worth being counted, were it not for the evil they do. The theater exists for them alone. They appear both as represented in the middle of the stage and representing on the two sides; they are characters on the stage and comedians on the benches.[98] And so it is that the Sphere of the world and of authors is shrinking; so it is that the modern stage never sheds its boring dignity. They know only how to show people in gilt clothing. You would think France were inhabited only by Counts and Chevaliers, and the more the populace is miserable and beggarly the more its tableau on stage is brilliant and magnificent. As a result, by depicting the ridiculousness of the estates that set the example for the others, they spread it rather than stifling it, and the populace, forever ape and imitator of the rich, goes to the theater less to laugh at their follies than to study them, and becomes even more crazy than them by imitating them. This is what Molière himself brought about; he corrected the court[99] by infecting the city, and his ridiculous Marquis were the first model of the bourgeois coxcombs who have succeeded them.

In general there is much talk and little action on the French stage; perhaps this is because the Frenchman indeed talks even more than he acts, or at least attaches a much higher value to what is said than to what is done. Someone said upon leaving a play on Denis the Tyrant, I have seen nothing, but I have heard a lot of words.[100] One can say the same thing on the way out after a French play. Racine and Corneille with all their genius themselves do nothing but talk, and their Successor[101] is the first who in imitation of the English has sometimes dared have the stage represent something. Ordinarily everything takes place in fine, well balanced, high

sounding dialogues, in which one immediately perceives that the primary concern of each interlocutor is to shine. Almost everything is uttered in general maxims. However excited they may be, they are always more mindful of the audience than of themselves; an Aphorism comes to them more easily than a sentiment; with exception of the plays of Racine and Molière,* the *I* is almost as scrupulously banned from the French stage as it is from the writings of Port Royal,[102] and human passions as modest as Christian humility never speak there except in the form of *one*.[103] Further, there is a certain affected dignity in gesture and diction, which never allows passion to speak exactly its language, nor the author to enter his character and transport himself to the scene of action, but keeps him ever in chains on the stage and under the eyes of the Spectators. And so the liveliest situations never let him neglect the lovely arrangement of sentences and elegant postures; and if despair plunges a dagger into his heart, not content with observing decency as he falls like Polyxena,[104] he does not fall at all, decency keeps him standing after his death,[105] and all those who have just expired leave the stage the next moment on their feet.

All that arises from the fact that on the stage the Frenchman does not look for naturalness and illusion and seeks only wit and thoughts; he values amusement and not imitation, and does not ask to be persuaded provided he is entertained. No one goes to the theater for the pleasure of the theater, but to see the assembly, be seen by it, collect material to contribute to the chitchat following the play, and one pays only enough attention to the performance to decide what to say about it. The actor for them is always an actor, never the character he represents. The man who speaks as master of the world is not at all Augustus, but Baron, Pompey's widow is Adrienne, Alzire is Mademoiselle Gaussin, and that proud savage is Grandval.[106] The Comedians[107] on the other hand entirely neglect the illusion since they can see no one cares about it. They put the Heroes of antiquity between six rows of young Parisians[108]; they paste French fashion over the Roman costume; you see Cornelia in tears caked with rouge, Cato powdered in white, and Brutus in a pannier.[109] None of that shocks anybody nor affects the plays' success; since they only see the Actor in the character, they likewise see only the Author in the play, and if the costume is neglected that is easily forgiven; for they know full well that Corneille was no tailor and Crébillon no wigmaker.[110]

Thus, from whatever standpoint things are considered, there is nothing

* Molière must not be associated in this regard with Racine; for the former is, like the others, full of maxims and aphorisms, especially in his verse plays; but in Racine all is sentiment, he knew how to make each one speak for himself, and it is for that that he is truly unique among the dramatic authors of his nation.

here but babble, jargon, incoherent utterances. On the stage as in the world however much you listen to what is said, you learn nothing about what is done, and why would you need to? When a man has spoken, does anyone look into his conduct? has he not done his bit, has judgment not been passed? Here the honorable man is not the one who does good deeds, but the one who says fine things, and a single ill-considered remark, blurted out without reflection, can work irreparable harm on the speaker which forty years' integrity would not blot out. In a word, although men's acts hardly resemble their words I see that they are depicted only by their words without regard to their acts; I also observe that in a large city society appears more pleasant, more open, even more secure than among less artificial people; but are men there indeed more human, more moderate, more just? I have no idea. These are still nothing but appearances, and beneath these open and agreeable exteriors hearts are perhaps more hidden, more sunken in upon themselves than ours. A mere foreigner, isolated, lacking business, connections, or pleasures, and intent on relying only on myself, how could I possibly judge?

However I am beginning to experience the intoxication into which this restless and tumultuous life plunges those who lead it, and I am falling into a dizziness like that felt by a man before whose eyes a plethora of objects are rapidly passed. None of those that strike me engages my heart, but taken together they disturb and suspend its affections, so much so that I forget what I am and to whom I belong. Every day when I leave home I lock up my sentiments under key, to don others that lend themselves to the frivolous objects that await me. Imperceptibly I judge and reason as I hear everyone judge and reason. If sometimes I try to shake off prejudices and see things as they are, at that moment I am crushed under a certain verbiage that much resembles reasoning. It is demonstrated to me incontrovertibly that only the semi-philosopher looks closely at the reality of things; that the truly wise man considers them only through their appearances; that he must take prejudices for principles, proprieties for laws, and that the most sublime wisdom consists in living like fools.

Thus forced to change the order of my moral affections, forced to attribute a value to fantasies, and impose silence on nature and reason, thus I see disfigured that divine model I bear within me that both served as object of my desires and as rule for my actions, I drift from whim to whim, and my tastes being constantly enslaved to opinion, I cannot a single day be sure what I will love the next.

Mortified, humiliated, dismayed to feel the nature of man decaying in me, and seeing myself so debased from that inner grandeur to which our enflamed hearts lifted each other, I return home in the evening prey to a

secret sadness, overwhelmed with a mortal disgust, and my heart empty and swollen like a ball filled with air.[111] O love! O pure sentiments it imparts to me!.... what a delight to return within myself! With what transport I there rediscover my first affections and first dignity? How I congratulate myself on seeing once again the image of virtue shining in all its splendor, and gaze at yours, O Julie, seated on a throne of glory and dispelling all these mirages with a single breath! I feel my oppressed soul begin to respire, it almost seems I have recovered my existence and my life, and I reclaim along with my love all the sublime sentiments that make it worthy of its object.

LETTER XVIII

From Julie

My good friend, I have just savored one of the sweetest spectacles that can ever delight my eyes. The most proper, the most amiable of maidens has finally become the worthiest and finest of wives. The honorable man whose wishes she has more than fulfilled, full of esteem and love for her, breathes only to cherish her, worship her, make her happy, and I am savoring the inexpressible delight of being witness to my friend's happiness, which is to say sharing it. You will not savor it any less, I am very sure, you whom she always loved so tenderly, you who were dear to her almost from her childhood, and to whom so many favors must have made her even dearer. Indeed, all the sentiments she experiences are felt in our hearts as in hers. If they are pleasurable to her, they are comforting to us, and such is the price of the friendship that binds us, that the felicity of one of the three is enough to ease the sufferings of the two others.

Let us not, however, disguise to ourselves the fact that this incomparable friend is going to escape from us in part. Now she is in a new order of things, now she is subject to new engagements, to new duties, and her heart which was ours alone now owes allegiance to other affections to which friendship must yield pride of place. There is more, my friend; we for our part must become more scrupulous about the tokens of her zeal; we must take into account not only her attachment to us, and our need of her, but what is appropriate to her new station, and what can please or displease her husband. We have no need to examine what virtue would require in this situation; the laws of friendship alone suffice. Would someone who could compromise a friend for his own private interest deserve to have friends? When she was a maiden, she was free, she had only herself to answer to for her actions, and the honesty of her intentions was enough to

justify her in her own eyes. She looked on us as spouses destined for each other, and with her sensible and pure heart combining the chastest modesty for herself with the most tender compassion for her blameworthy friend, she covered my fault without sharing it. But now, all that is changed; she is accountable to another for her conduct; she has not only engaged her faith, she has estranged her freedom. As custodian of two people's honor at once, it is not enough that she be honest, she must also be honored; and it is not enough for her to do nothing that is not good, she must further do nothing that is not approved. A virtuous woman must not only merit her husband's esteem but obtain it; if he finds fault with her, she is at fault; and were she innocent, she is in the wrong the moment she is suspected; for appearances themselves are counted among her duties.[112]

I cannot clearly see whether all these reasons are good; you will be the judge; but a certain inward sentiment alerts me that it is not right for my Cousin to continue being my confidante, nor that she should be the first to tell me so. I have often found myself mistaken with respect to my reasonings, never with respect to the secret stirrings that inspire them in me, and the result is that I have more confidence in my instinct than my reason.

Acting on this principle I have already found a pretext to take back your letters, which fear of discovery led me to keep at her place. She has returned them to me with a reluctance my heart perceived, and which amply confirmed to me that I had done what had to be done. We did not spell this out, but our eyes did it for us, she embraced me tearfully; we could feel without speaking how little the tender language of friendship needs the help of words.

As for the address to use in place of hers, I had first thought of Fanchon Anet's, and that is indeed the safest path we could choose; but if that young woman is of lower rank than my cousin, is that any reason to have less deference for her insofar as honesty is concerned? Is it not to be feared on the contrary, that less elevated sentiments may render my example more dangerous, that what was for the one only a gesture of sublime friendship might be for the other the beginning of corruption, and that by abusing her gratitude I might force virtue itself to be an instrument of vice? Ah is it not enough for me to be blameworthy without taking accomplices, and compounding my faults with the weight of another's? Let us not even think of it, my friend; I have thought up another expedient which is far less safe, to be sure, but also less reprehensible, insofar as it compromises no one and puts no one in our confidence; it is for you to write me under just any name, as for example, Monsieur du Bosquet,[113] and use an envelope addressed to Regianino, whom I shall have taken care to notify. Thus Regianino himself will know nothing; at the very most he

will have suspicions he would not dare verify, for Milord Edward upon whom his fortune depends has assured me of his reliability. While our correspondence continues via this means, I shall see whether we can revert to the one that served us during your journey to the Valais, or some other permanent and safe one.

Even if I did not know the state of your heart, I would perceive, given the ill humor that pervades your descriptions, that the life you are leading is not to your liking. Monsieur de Muralt's letters to which the French so objected were less harsh than yours; like a child who takes out his spite on his masters, you avenge your obligation to study the world, on the first to teach you. What surprises me the most is that the thing that revolts you at first is the very one that captivates most foreigners, that is the hospitality of the French and the overall tone of their society, although by your own admission you personally cannot complain. I have not forgotten what distinguishes Paris in particular and a large city in general; but I see that, unfamiliar with what is appropriate in the one and the other, you blithely write your criticism, before you know whether it is a case of slander or an observation. However that may be, I like the French nation, and speaking ill of it does nothing to oblige me. To the good books we get from France I owe the greater part of the instruction that we have taken together. If our country is no longer barbarous, to whom have we the obligation? The two greatest, the two most virtuous moderns, Catinat, Fénelon, were both French.[114] Henry IV, the King I love, the good King, was French.[115] If France is not the country of free men, it is the country of men of truth, and to the wise the latter freedom is as precious as the former. Hospitable, generous with the foreigner, the French tolerate from him even the truth that hurts them, and one would be stoned in London for daring to say about the English half the ugly things that the French allow to be said about them in Paris. My Father, who spent his life in France, speaks with nothing less than fervor of that good and affable people. If he has shed his blood in the Prince's service, the Prince has not forgotten him in his retirement, and still honors him with benefits[116]; thus I regard myself as having a stake in the glory of a country in which my Father found glory himself. My friend, if every people has its good and bad qualities, respect at least the truth that praises, as well as the truth that finds fault.[117]

I shall go further; why should you waste in paying idle calls the time remaining to you where you are? Is Paris less than London the theater of talents, and do foreigners make their own way less easily there? Believe me, all the English are not Lord Edwards, and all the French are not like those fancy talkers you find so terribly unpleasant. Try, strive, make a few at-

tempts, if only to delve more deeply into their manners, and judge in action these folk who talk so well. My Cousin's father says that you are familiar with the constitution of the empire and the Princes' interests.[118] Milord Edward also considers that you have studied quite well the principles of politics and the various systems of government. I have an idea that in the whole world the country where merit is most greatly honored is the one that best befits you, and that you have only to be known in order to be employed. As for Religion, why should yours handicap you more than someone else? Is reason not protection against intolerance and fanaticism? Are the French more bigoted than the Germans? And who would prevent your achieving in Paris what Monsieur de St. Saphorin has achieved in Vienna?[119] If you consider the aim, will not the promptest attempts bring it about more quickly? If you compare the means, is it not still more honest to get ahead with one's talents than with one's friends? If you think... ah that sea!.... a longer journey.... I would like England better, if Paris were on its far side.

With respect to that great City, may I venture to point out an affectation I perceive in your letters? Why have you who told me with such pleasure about the women of the Valais, nothing to say about the women of Paris? Are those gallant and famous women less worth the trouble to describe them than a few simple and rustic mountain women? Perhaps you fear making me uneasy with a tableau of the most seductive persons in creation? You are mistaken, my friend; the worst thing you can do for my peace of mind is to fail to mention them, and whatever you tell me about them, to me your silence about them is far more suspect than your praise.

I should be most pleased to receive a brief word on the Paris Opera of which such wondrous things are spoken here*[120]; for after all the music may be bad, and the show still have its beauties; if it does not, that is a subject for your disparagement and at least you will offend no one.

I do not know whether I should bother telling you that on the occasion of the wedding there also have come to see me these last few days two wife-hunters,[121] as if by appointment. The first from Yverdun, lodging and hunting from château to château; the other from Germanic country in the coach from Bern. The former is a sort of coxcomb; speaking with enough self-assurance to make his gibes appear witty to those who listen only to the tone. The other is a big, timid dunce, not with the appealing sort of timidity that comes from fear of displeasing, but with the embarrassment

* I would have a very poor opinion of anyone who, knowing Julie's character and situation, would not instantly guess that this curiosity does not come from her. We shall soon see that her lover was not deceived in this. If he had been, he would no longer have loved her.

of an idiot who knows not what to say, and the unease of a libertine who feels out of place with an honest maiden. Knowing very certainly my father's intentions regarding these two Gentlemen, it pleases me to make use of the freedom he grants me to treat them after my fancy, and I do not believe that fancy will allow the one that brings them here to survive for long. I hate them for having the boldness to besiege a heart that belongs to you, lacking weapons to compete for it with you; if they had some, I would hate them even more, but where would they get them—they, and others, and the whole wide world? No, no, be assured, my gentle friend. Were I to find another merit equal to yours, were another you to come along, the first would still be the only one heard. Therefore take no mind of these two louts whom I scarcely deign to tell you about. What a pleasure it would be to mete out to them two such perfectly equal doses of disgust that they would decide to go back where they came from, and I could notify you at one and the same time of both their departures.

Monsieur de Crouzas has just given us a refutation of Pope's epistles[122] which I have read with displeasure. I do not know, in truth, which of the two authors is right; but I know well that Monsieur de Crouzas's book will never inspire a good deed, and that there is nothing good one is not tempted to do after reading Pope's. I for one have no other manner of judging my Readings than to sound the dispositions in which they leave my soul, and I scarcely imagine what sort of goodness a book can possess when it does not lead its readers to do good.*

Farewell, my too dear Friend, I would not choose to end so soon; but I am awaited, and being called. I leave you regretfully, for I am cheerful and like to share my pleasures with you; they are inspired and augmented by the fact that my mother has been better these last few days; she has felt strong enough to attend the wedding, and stand in as mother to her Niece, or rather her second daughter. It made poor Claire weep with joy. Imagine how I was, who so little deserving to hold on to her constantly fear I will lose her. In truth she does the honors of the occasion as graciously as if she were in perfect health; it even seems that a trace of remaining languor makes her candid politeness even more touching. No, never was this incomparable mother so good, so charming, so worthy of adoration!.... Do you know she asked Monsieur d'Orbe several times for news of you? Although she doesn't mention you to me, I am not unaware that she likes you, and if ever she were listened to, your happiness and mine would be her prime endeavor. Ah! if your heart is capable of gratitude, what need it has of it, and what debts it has to repay!

* If the reader approves this rule, and uses it to judge this collection, the editor will not appeal his judgment.

LETTER XIX
To Julie

All right, my Julie, scold me, quarrel with me, beat me; I will bear it all, but I shall nonetheless continue to tell you what I think. Who shall be the custodian of my sentiments, if it is not you who enlightens them, and with whom would my heart consent to speak, if you refused to hear it? When I give you an account of my observations and judgments, that is so you will correct them, not so you will approve them, and the more errors I may commit, the more I must hasten to tell you about them. If I find fault with the disorders that strike me in this great city, I shall not apologize on the pretext I am speaking to you in confidence; for I never say anything about a third party that I am not prepared to say to his face, and in everything I write you about the Parisians, I am merely repeating what I say to their faces every day. They are not resentful of it; they agree on many points. They complained of our Muralt, so I understand; it can be seen and felt how he hates them, even in his praise of them, and I am much mistaken if even in my criticism the opposite cannot be perceived. The esteem and gratitude their kindnesses inspire in me only increase my candor, it may not be without usefulness to some few, and, judging by the way they all tolerate truth from my mouth, I dare believe we are worthy, they to hear it and I to say it. Thus it is, my Julie, that the truth that finds fault is more honorable than the truth that praises; for praise serves merely to corrupt those who have a taste for it and the most unworthy are always the most avid for it; but censure is useful and merit alone is able to tolerate it. I tell you this from the bottom of my heart, I honor the French people as the only one that truly loves men and is beneficent by character; but that is the very reason why I am less disposed to concede to it the general admiration to which it pretends even in the very defects it admits to. If the French had no virtues, I would have nothing to say; if they had no vices they would not be men: they have too many praiseworthy sides to be always praised.

As for the enterprises you speak of, they are impracticable, because to undertake them would require that I employ means unsuitable to me and which you yourself have forbidden me. Republican austerity is not good form in this country; here more flexible virtues are required, ones that can more easily bend to the interests of friends or protectors. Merit is honored, I agree; but here the talents that lead to reputation are not at all those that lead to fortune, and if I were unhappy enough to possess these, would Julie resign herself to becoming the wife of an upstart? In England it is completely different, and although morals there are perhaps even worse

than in France, that does not prevent someone from succeeding by more honest pathways, because with the people playing a larger part in the government, public esteem there is a greater means of credit. You are not unaware that Milord Edward's design is to make use of this means to my advantage, and mine is to justify his zeal. The place on earth where I am furthest from you is the one where nothing I can do will draw me closer. O Julie! though it is difficult to obtain your hand, it is even more so to deserve it, and that is the noble task that love dictates to me.

You relieve a great concern by giving me better news of your mother. I saw you were already so anxious for her before my departure that I dared not tell you what I was thinking; but I found her emaciated, changed, and I feared some dangerous illness. Preserve her for my sake, because she is dear to me, because I honor her in my heart, because my only hope lies in her kindness, and above all because she is the mother of my Julie.

I shall say of the two wife-hunters that I do not like that word, even in jest. Besides, the tone you adopt to tell me about them keeps me from fearing them, and I no longer hate these wretches, since you believe you do. But I admire your guilelessness in thinking you know hatred. Do you not see that what you take for hatred is vexed love? Thus coos the white dove whose beloved is being hunted. Come now Julie, come now incomparable maid, if you ever manage to hate something, I will manage to cease loving you.

P. S. How I pity you being pestered by those two importunate men! For your own sake, send them away post haste.

LETTER XX

From Julie

My friend, I have placed in Monsieur d'Orbe's hands a parcel he has agreed to send to Monsieur Silvestre's address where you can claim it; but I warn you not to open it until you are alone and in your room. You will find in this parcel a small furnishing intended for your use.

It is a sort of amulet that lovers are wont to wear. There is a curious manner for making it work. It must be gazed upon every morning for a quarter-hour until one feels possessed of a certain tenderness. Then it is applied to the eyes, to the mouth, and to the heart; it acts, they say, as prophylactic during the day against the unhealthy air of the land of gallantry. A most singular electric virtue is also attributed to this sort of talisman, but it operates only between faithful lovers. It is to communicate the pressure of

the other's kisses at more than a hundred leagues' distance. I do not vouch for the experiment's success; I only say that it is for you to try it.

Be at ease over the two Swains or pretenders, or whatever you want to call them, for henceforth the name no longer has any importance. They are gone: may they go in peace; now that I no longer see them, I no longer hate them.

LETTER XXI

To Julie

You asked for it, Julie, I must then portray for you these fetching Parisian women? Proud woman! This homage your charms had not yet received. With all your feigned jealousy, with your modesty and love, I see more vanity than fear lurking behind this curiosity. However that may be, I shall be truthful; I can afford to be; I would more gladly be so if I had more to praise. I wish they were a hundredfold more charming! I wish their appeal were sufficient to pay a new tribute to yours!

You complained of my silence? Ah dear God, what would I have told you? By reading this letter you will sense why I enjoyed telling you about your neighbors the Valaisan women, and why I did not mention the women of this country. It was that the former constantly called me back to you, and the latter.... read on, and then you shall judge me. And yet few people share my opinion of French Ladies, if indeed I am not completely alone in my judgment of them. On this point fairness obliges me to forewarn you, so you may know that I describe them to you, perhaps not as they are, but as I see them. Despite that, if I am unfair to them, you will not fail to criticize me again, and you will be more unfair than I; for all the fault in this is yours alone.

Let us begin with the outside. That is as deep as most observers go. If I followed them in this, the women of this country would have great cause for complaint; they have an outside of character as well as of countenance, and as the one is hardly more to their advantage than the other, to judge them only by that is to do them wrong. In appearance they are passable at best and on the whole rather plain than pretty; I leave aside the exceptions. Smallish rather than well built, they are not slim at the waist, and so they willingly favor fashions that disguise it; in which respect women of other countries seem to me fairly foolish, trying to imitate fashions made for hiding flaws they do not have.

Their gait is easy and common. Their bearing is devoid of affectation because they do not like constraint: but they naturally have a certain *disin-*

voltura[123] that is not lacking in grace, and that they often insist on pushing to the point of foolishness. Their complexion is middling white, and they are commonly a bit skinny, which does not help to make their skin more attractive. As far as the bust is concerned, it is the other extreme from the Valaisans. With tightly laced corsets they attempt to give a misleading notion of its firmness; there are other means to give a misleading notion of its coloration. Although I have perceived these objects only from very far off, they are so available for inspection that little remains to be guessed at. These Ladies in this respect seem ill to understand their own interests; for provided the face is agreeable, the observer's imagination would moreover serve them much better than his eyes, and according to the Gascon Philosopher, total hunger is far more acute than hunger that has already been sated, by at least one of the senses.[124]

Their features are not very regular, but though they are not beautiful, they have something about their looks that compensates for beauty, and sometimes eclipses it. Their bright and lively eyes however are neither piercing nor soft: although they attempt to brighten them with rouge, the expression they impart to them by this means is closer to the fire of anger than to that of love; naturally they express only gaiety, or if they sometimes seem to solicit a tender sentiment, they never promise any.*

They dress so well, or at least, such is their reputation, that in this as in all else they serve as model to the rest of Europe. Indeed, it is not possible to make use with more taste of a costume so curious. They are, of all women, the least subservient to their own fashions. Fashion rules provincial ladies, but Parisian ladies rule fashion, and they can make it bend each to her own advantage. The former are like ignorant and servile copyists who copy everything right down to the spelling mistakes; the latter are authors who copy as masters, and know how to correct misreadings.[125]

Their finery is more studied than sumptuous; it is more characterized by elegance than elaborateness. The quick succession of fashions that dates everything from one year to the next, a tidiness that makes them like to change their attire often, protects them from ridiculous sumptuousness; they spend no less for that, but their spending is more shrewd; instead of threadbare and grandiose dresses as in Italy, here you see dresses that are simpler but always new. The two sexes in that regard manifest the same moderation, the same refinement, and this taste gives me great pleasure: I am very pleased to see neither patches nor stains.[126] Among no people except ours do women in particular wear less gold. You see the same fabrics across all estates, and it would be difficult to tell a Duchess from a bour-

* Let us speak for ourselves, my dear philosopher; why should others not be more fortunate? Only a coquette promises to everybody what she should keep to only one.

geoise woman if the former did not possess the art of inventing distinctions the other would not dare imitate. Now a difficulty seems to arise from this; for whatever fashion is adopted at Court, that fashion is instantly followed in town, and Parisian Bourgeoises are not like provincial and foreign women, who are never more up to date than the previous fashion. Nor is it as in other countries where, the highest ranking being also the richest, the ladies are distinguishable by a degree of luxury the others cannot match. If the ladies of the Court followed that example here, they would soon be outshone by the wives of the Financiers.

So what have they done? They have chosen surer, more clever means, which reflect more thought. They know that the notions of decency and modesty are deeply etched into the minds of the people. It is that which suggested to them fashions that cannot be imitated. They saw that the people had an aversion to rouge, which they insist on coarsely calling fard[127]; they have put on four fingers deep[128] not of fard, but of rouge; for the word being changed, the thing is no longer the same. They saw that an uncovered bust is a scandal to the public; they have considerably lowered their necklines. They saw.... oh many things, that my Julie will surely never see, Demoiselle that she is![129] They have incorporated into their manners the same spirit that governs their attire. That charming modesty which distinguishes, honors, and beautifies your sex to them appeared base and lowborn; they have breathed into their gesture and speech a noble impudence, and there is not an honorable man who would not lower his eyes at their bold gaze.[130] So it is that ceasing to be women, for fear of being indistinguishable from other women, they prefer their rank to their sex, and imitate whores, so as not to be imitated.[131]

I do not know how far this imitation on their part goes, but I know they have been unsuccessful in avoiding completely the imitation they were trying to prevent. As for the rouge and the lowered necklines, they have gone as far as they possibly could. The women of the town thought it better to give up their natural colors and the charms that the *amoroso pensier*[132] of lovers could lend them, than to stay done up like Bourgeoises, and if this example did not spread to the lower estates, it is because a woman on foot in such attire is none too secure against the insults of the crowd. These insults are the cry of outraged decency, and in this situation as in many others, the brutishness of the people, more honest than the decorum of polite society, perhaps keeps a hundred thousand women here within the bounds of modesty; such is precisely what the clever women who invented these fashions were after.

As for the soldier-like demeanor and grenadier tone of voice, it is less noticeable, given that it is more universal, and is hardly perceptible except

to new arrivals. From the Faubourg Saint Germain to the market place[133] there are few women in Paris whose approach, whose gaze is not sufficiently brazen to disconcert anyone who has seen nothing of that sort in his own country; and from the surprise provoked by these novel manners comes the awkward air that foreigners are faulted for. It is even worse the minute these women open their mouths. The tone is not the sweet and dainty one of our Vaudoises.[134] It is a certain hard, acid, interrogative, imperious, mocking accent, and stronger than a man's. If in their tone there remains something of their sex's grace, their intrepid and inquisitive manner of staring at people utterly eclipses it. It seems that they enjoy relishing the embarrassment they give to those who see them for the first time; but it is to be supposed that the embarrassment would please them less if they had more of an inkling of its cause.

However, whether because of my partiality in favor of beauty, or because of beauty's own instinct to set itself off, beautiful women seem to me in general a bit more modest, and I discern more decency in their comportment. This reserve comes easily to them, they are well aware of their advantages, they know they have no need to tease in order to attract us. Perhaps also effrontery is more perceptible and shocking when combined with ugliness, and it is certain that one would rather cover a shameless ugly face with slaps than with kisses, whereas with modesty it can inspire a tender compassion that sometimes leads to love. But although in general one notices here something gentler in the comportment of pretty persons, there is still so much simpering in their manners, and they are always so visibly preoccupied with themselves, that one is never exposed in this country to the temptation that Monsieur de Muralt sometimes experienced in the company of English women, to tell one she is beautiful for the pleasure of letting her know.[135]

Neither the jollity natural to this nation, nor the desire to imitate pretentious manners are the sole causes of this freedom of expression and comportment one observes here in women. It seems to have a deeper root in their manners, through the indiscreet and continual mixing of the two sexes, which leads each of them to adopt the air, language, and manners of the other. Our Swiss women rather like to gather together*; they spend their time in sweet familiarity, and although evidently they do not despise the society of men, it is certain that their presence introduces a sort of strain into this little gynecocracy. In Paris, it is just the opposite; women like spending their time only with men, only in their presence are they at

* All this has much changed. The circumstances make these letters appear to have been written only about twenty years ago. From the manners, the style, one would think they were from another century.

ease. In each society the mistress of the house is almost always alone in the middle of a circle of men. One can hardly conceive whence come enough men to spread themselves everywhere; but Paris is full of adventurers and bachelors who spend their lives running from house to house, and men like money seem to multiply by circulating. So that is where a woman learns to speak, act, and think like them, and they like her. That is where, sole recipient of their petty gallantries, she placidly enjoys those insulting compliments to which they trouble not to lend even an appearance of good faith. But so what? Seriously or in jest, they pay attention to her and that is all she wants. Should another woman come forth, instantly a ceremonious tone takes the place of familiarity, pretentious manners set in, the men's attention is divided, and the two women hold each other in a concealed unease that can be relieved only by separating.

The ladies of Paris like to see plays, that is to say to be seen at plays, but every time they want to go their problem is to find another lady to accompany them; for the custom allows no woman to go alone to a grand loge,[136] not even with her husband, not even with another man. It would be hard to express how difficult these parties are to arrange in this most sociable country; of ten that are planned, nine fall through; the desire to go to the play causes them to be set up, the annoyance of going together causes them to be broken. I believe women could easily abrogate this awkward custom; for what is the reason a lady cannot be seen alone in public? But it is perhaps this lack of a reason that keeps it alive. It is ideal to focus rules of propriety as much as one can on matters where it would serve no purpose to do without. What would a woman gain by the right to go without a lady-friend to the Opera? Is it not preferable to reserve this right for receiving her men-friends alone?

It is certain that a thousand secret liaisons must be the fruit of their manner of living dispersed and isolated among so many men. Everyone now admits this, and experience has destroyed the absurd maxim about overcoming temptations by multiplying them. So it is no longer said that this custom is more honest, but that it is more agreeable, and this is something I do not find any truer; for what love can obtain where modesty is derided, and what charm can a life hold that is deprived at once of love and honesty? And so since the great scourge of all these dissipated people is boredom, the women are less concerned with being loved than being amused, to them being courted and served is more important than love, and provided a man is assiduous, it matters little that he be passionate. The very words love and lover are banished from the inner circles of both sexes and relegated along with the likes of *chain* and *flame* to Novels that are no longer read.[137]

It seems that the whole order of natural sentiments is reversed here. The heart contracts no bonds, maidens are not allowed to have one. That right is reserved to married women, and excludes no one from their choice except their own husbands. It would be better for a mother to have twenty lovers than her daughter even one. Adultery causes no revulsion, nothing about it goes against propriety; the most proper of Novels, those which everyone reads for instruction are full of it, and license is no longer blameworthy, the minute it is combined with infidelity. O Julie! A woman who has not feared to defile the marriage bed a hundred times would dare with her impure mouth to denounce our chaste embraces, and condemn the union of two sincere hearts that never were capable of breaking faith. One would say that marriage in Paris is not of the same nature as everywhere else. It is a sacrament, at least that is what they pretend, and this sacrament lacks the force of the most minor civil contracts: it seems to be no more than the consent of two free persons who agree to live together, to bear the same name, to recognize the same children; but who have, other than that, no sort of claim to each other; and a husband who ventured to criticize his wife's misconduct here would provoke no less grumbling than one who in our country would suffer his wife's public disorderliness.[138] Wives, for their part, do not treat husbands with rigidity, and there has been no instance of having them punished for copying their infidelities. Besides, how can one expect from either party a more honest outcome of a bond about which the heart was not consulted? Anyone who marries only fortune or station owes nothing to the person.

Love itself, even love has lost its rights and is no less denatured than marriage. Given that Spouses here are bachelors and maidens who live together in order to enjoy greater freedom, lovers are passing acquaintances who get together for amusement, for show, out of habit, or for the needs of the moment. The heart has nothing to do with these liaisons, only convenience and certain surface formalities are considered. They consist, if you will, in knowing each other, being together, making arrangements, meeting, even less if that is possible.[139] A liaison of the gallant type lasts a little longer than a social call; it is a collection of pretty conversations and pretty Letters filled with portraits, maxims, philosophy, and wit. With respect to the physical, nothing so mysterious is called for; they have very cleverly discovered the need to make the moment of desire coincide with the means of satisfying it: the first woman, the first man to pass by, one's lover or another, a man is after all a man, they are all almost equally good, and there is at least consistency in that, for why should one be more faithful to a lover than to a husband? And then at a certain age all men are practically the same man, all women the same woman; all these dolls come

from the same milliner, and there is scarcely any other choice to be made than of what falls most readily to hand.[140]

Inasmuch as I myself know nothing of this, the manner in which I was told about it was so extraordinary that I was unable to understand what I was being told. What I could make out was that for most women the lover is like one of the house staff: if he does not perform his duty, he is fired and another is found; if he finds a better offer or gets bored with the job, he leaves and another is found. Some women, it is said, are capricious enough even to give the master of the house a try, for after all, he is still a sort of man. This whim does not last; when it is over he is dismissed and another is found, or if he insists, he is kept on and another is found.

But, I would say to the person explaining these strange customs to me, how does a woman then get along subsequently with all those others,[141] who have thus taken or been given their leave? Well! he replied, she doesn't. They no longer see each other; no longer know each other. If ever they took a fancy to start over, they would have a new acquaintance to make, and it would be surprising if they even remembered having met. I see, said I; but even when I scale down these exaggerations, I cannot conceive how after such a tender union they can see each other dispassionately; how it is that the heart no longer pounds at the name of one who was once loved; how one can fail to thrill when encountering that person! You make me laugh, he interrupted, with your thrills! Do you want all our women then to do nothing but fall into spasms?

Discount a portion of this doubtlessly exaggerated tableau; put Julie alongside the rest, and remember my heart; I have nothing more to tell you.

Yet it must be admitted: several of these disagreeable impressions fade by force of habit. If the bad is more readily perceived than the good, that does not prevent the good from manifesting itself in turn; the charms of mind and disposition bring out those of the person. The first antipathy overcome soon changes into an opposite sentiment. That is the other vantage point of the tableau, and fairness does not allow exhibiting only its most unfavorable side.

The main objection to large cities is that there men become other than what they are, and society imparts to them, as it were, a being other than their own. This is true, especially in Paris, and especially with respect to women, who derive from the way others look at them the only existence that matters to them. Accosting a Lady in a gathering, instead of the Parisian you think you see, you are seeing only the simulacrum of fashion. Her height, her size, her gait, her waist, her bust, her colorations, her air, her look, her talk, her manners, nothing of all that is hers, and if you saw her in her natural state, you could not recognize her. Now this trade-off is rarely

favorable to those women who make it, and in general there is nothing to be gained from all that is substituted for nature. But nature is never completely obliterated; it always shows through somewhere, and the observer's art consists in a certain skill in spotting it. This art is not a difficult one when it comes to the women of this country; for as they have more naturalness than they think, no more is required than to frequent them assiduously, than to detach them from that perpetual posturing they like so much, in order to see them quickly as they are, and it is then that all the aversion they first inspired changes into esteem and friendship.

This I had occasion to observe last week on a country outing to which a few women had foolishly invited me and several other recent arrivals, without paying too much attention to whether we suited them, or perhaps to have the pleasure of laughing at us at their leisure. That did not fail to happen the first day. First they showered us with amusing and malicious quips which always falling flat soon exhausted their quiver.[142] After that they submitted graciously and, unable to bring us around to using their style, were reduced to adopting ours. I do not know whether they found themselves better off with this trade, for my part I found myself marvelously better off; I was surprised to see that I obtained more enlightenment from them than I would from many men. Their cleverness so adorned common sense that I regretted they had put so much of it into distorting it, and I deplored, doing better justice to the women of this country, that so many amiable persons lacked reason only because they wanted none. I also perceived that familiar and natural graces insensibly superseded the stiff airs of the city; for one adopts unawares manners that match the things one says, and there is no way to put the grimaces of coquetry[143] on intelligent thoughts. I found them prettier once they were not trying so hard to be pretty, and I felt that in order to please they needed but not to disguise themselves. I ventured to suspect on this basis that Paris, that supposed seat of good taste, is perhaps in all the world the place where there is the least of it, since all the efforts expended there in pleasing distort true beauty.

Thus we remained four or five days together, content with each other and ourselves. Instead of rehearsing Paris and its follies, we forgot it. We had no other care than to enjoy amongst ourselves an agreeable and pleasant society. We needed neither satires nor jests to put ourselves in a good humor, and our laughter, like your Cousin's, was not in mockery but in jollity.

Another thing finally changed my mind on their account. Often in the middle of our liveliest discussions, someone would come utter a word in the hostess's ear. She would go out, close herself in to write, and not return

for a long while. It was a simple matter to attribute these disappearances to some sentimental correspondence, or what is thus called. Another woman slipped in a hint to this effect which was rather ill received; which gave me to understand that if the absentee lacked lovers, at least she had friends. However curiosity having sharpened my perception, what was my surprise when I learned that these supposed Parisian messengers were peasants of the parish, who came in their calamities to implore their Lady's protection! The one, overcharged with taxes[144] to the benefit of someone richer; another, enlisted in the militia without regard to his age and his children*[145]; another, oppressed by a powerful neighbor's unjust lawsuit; another, wiped out by hail, and whose lease had to be promptly paid up. So all had some kind of mercy to ask, all were patiently heard, none was rebuffed, and the time attributed to love letters was being employed writing in support of these wretches.[146] I can hardly tell you how astonished I was to learn, both of the pleasure such a young and frivolous woman took in fulfilling these amiable duties, and of how little ostentation she put into it. What? I said, quite moved; if she were Julie, she would be no different! From that instant I have regarded her only with respect, and in my eyes all her flaws are blotted out.

Ever since my quest took this turn, I have learned a thousand things advantageous to these same women whom I had first found so unbearable. All foreigners unanimously agree that, aside from fashionable ways of talking, there is no country on earth where women are more enlightened, speak in general more sensibly, more judiciously, and know how to give the better advice when needed. If we take away the jargon of gallantry and witticism, what profit will we derive from the conversation of a Spanish, Italian, or German woman? None, and you know, Julie, what our Swiss women are usually like in this respect. But if you dare appear ungallant and entice French women out of that fortress, which in truth they are hardly willing to forsake, you can still find a worthy opponent in the open field, and it is like wrestling with a man, so well does she know how to brandish reason and make a virtue out of necessity. With regard to good character, I shall not attest the zeal with which they serve their friends, for what governs in this may be a certain intensity of †vanity common to all countries; but whereas ordinarily they love only themselves, a lengthy habituation, when they have enough constancy to acquire it, takes the place of a fairly warm sentiment. Those who can sustain a ten-year attachment ordinarily maintain it for life, and they love their old friends more tenderly, more certainly at least than their young lovers.

* We saw that in the other war; but not in this one, so far as I know. Married men are spared, and many thus are induced to marry.

A rather common remark that seems to tax women is that they do everything in this country, and consequently more evil than good; but what justifies them is that they do evil impelled by men, and good on their own initiative. This in no way contradicts what I was saying above, that the heart has nothing to do with the commerce of the two sexes: for French gallantry has given women a universal power that requires no tender sentiment to perdure. Everything depends on them; nothing is done that is not by or for them; Olympus and Parnassus, glory and fortune are equally under their power. Books have only as much value, authors have only as much admiration as it pleases women to grant them; they decide sovereignly about the highest knowledge, as well the most agreeable. Poetry, Literature, history, philosophy, even politics, one can notice right away by the style of all books that they are written to amuse pretty women, and the Bible has just been recast in the form of gallant stories.[147] In business matters, they have a natural influence even over their husbands for obtaining what they ask for, not because they are their husbands, but because they are men and the convention is that a man shall refuse nothing to any woman, were she his own wife.

Furthermore, this domination is founded on neither attachment nor respect, but only politeness and knowledge of the ways of the world; for besides, it is no less essential in French gallantry to scorn women than to serve them. This scorn is a sort of authority that impresses them; it testifies that one has spent enough time among them to know them. Anyone who respected them would pass for a novice in their eyes, a knight-errant, a man who has known women only in Novels. They judge themselves with such equity that to honor them would make a man unworthy of pleasing them, and the principal quality of a man of good fortunes is to be supremely impertinent.

However that may be, it is no use for them to take pride in meanness; they are good in spite of themselves, and this above all is how their goodness of heart serves a purpose. In any country people in charge of much business are always repugnant and short on commiseration, and Paris being the business center of Europe's largest people, those who conduct it are also the hardest of men. So it is to women one turns to obtain favors; they are the recourse of the wretched; they are not deaf to their cries; they listen to them, console and serve them. In the midst of the frivolous life they lead, they know how to take moments away from their pleasures to give over to their good natural disposition, and though a few make a vile traffic of the services they render, thousands of others attend every day to aiding the poor with their purse and the oppressed with their influence. It

is true that their attentions are often indiscreet, and that they do unscrupulous harm to the wretched they do not know, in order to serve the ones they know: but how can one know everyone in such a large country, and what more can goodness of soul do separated from true virtue, whose most sublime accomplishment is less to do good than never to do wrong? With that qualification, it is certain that they have some inclination for the good, that they do a great deal of good, do it wholeheartedly, that they alone maintain in Paris the little bit of humanity that still prevails there, and that without them one would see greedy and insatiable men devouring each other like wolves.

I would never have learnt all that if I had kept to the depictions furnished by those who spin out Novels and Comedies, who are inclined to see in women ridiculous traits they themselves share rather than the good qualities they do not possess, or who paint masterpieces of virtue that women exempt themselves from imitating by styling them fantasies, instead of urging them to do good by praising the good they really do. Novels are perhaps the ultimate kind of instruction remaining to be offered to a people so corrupt that any other is useless; then I would wish that the composition of these sorts of books be permitted only to honest but sensible persons whose hearts would depict themselves in their writings, to authors who would not be above human frailties, who would not from the very start display virtue in Heaven beyond the reach of men, but induce us to love it by depicting it at first less austere, and then from the lap of vice know the art of leading men imperceptibly toward it.[148]

I forewarned you, I in no way share the common opinion concerning this country's women. They are unanimously found to possess the most enchanting manner of engaging conversation, the most seductive graces, the most refined coquetry, sublimity in gallantry, and the art of pleasing to the supreme degree. For my part, I find their way of accosting you shocking, their coquetry repulsive, their manners immodest. I imagine that the heart must close itself to all their advances, and I shall never be persuaded that they could for a moment speak of love without revealing themselves at the same time as incapable of inspiring and of feeling any.

On the other hand, renown teaches us to mistrust their character, it depicts them as frivolous, devious, wily, foolish, fickle, speaking well, but not thinking, feeling even less, and thus expending all their merit in empty prattle. All this seems to me to be external to them like their hoops and their rouge. These are vices just for show which one must possess in Paris, and which ultimately conceal their sense, reason, humanity, natural goodness; they are less indiscreet, less meddlesome than in our country, less

perhaps than anywhere else. They are more solidly instructed and their instruction contributes more to their judgment. In a word, if I dislike them for all that characterizes the sex they have disfigured, I respect them for relations with ours that do us honor, and I find that they make a hundred times finer men of merit than appealing women.[149]

Conclusion: if Julie had not existed, if my heart could have endured some attachment other than the one for which it was born, never would I have taken my wife in Paris, still less my mistress; but I would willingly have made a lady friend here, and that treasure would have consoled me, perhaps, for not finding here the other two.*

LETTER XXII

To Julie

Since receiving your letter, I have been every day to M. Silvestre's to claim the little parcel. It had still not come, and consumed by a frightful impatience, I have seven times made the trip in vain. Finally the eighth time, I received the parcel. I no sooner had it in my hands than, without paying for the shipping or asking the price, without a word to anyone, I went out like a scatterbrain, and I was in such a hurry to return home, I blundered so hastily down totally unfamiliar streets, that after a half-hour, trying to find the Rue de Tournon where I live, I found myself in the Marais at the other end of Paris.[150] I was forced to take a cab to get back more quickly; this is the first time I have done that in the morning for my private business; I am reluctant to use one even for some afternoon visits; for I have two entirely serviceable legs, and would most regret it if being a bit more affluent caused me to neglect their use.

I was most undecided in the cab with my parcel; I did not want to open it before I got home, such was your order. Besides, a sort of sensuality that lets me neglect my own comfort in common things causes me to pursue it assiduously in true pleasures. Then I can suffer no sort of distraction, and want to have time and leisure to savor everything that comes from you. I was thus holding this parcel with an anxious curiosity I could not overcome: I attempted to feel through its wrappings what it might contain, and to see the way it shifted from one hand to the other, one would have thought it was burning them. Not that its volume, weight, and the tone of

* I shall take care not to pronounce on this letter; but I doubt that a judgment that liberally grants to the women in question qualities they scorn, and denies them the only ones they deem important, is likely to be welcomed by them.

your letter had not given me some intimation of the truth; but how could I conceive how you might have gone about finding the artist and the opportunity? That I still cannot conceive; it is a miracle of love; the more it passes my reason, the more it enchants my heart, and one of the pleasures it gives me is that it has me completely mystified.

Finally I arrive, I hurry, I shut myself in my room, I sit down out of breath, I place a trembling hand on the seal. O the first effect of the talisman![151] I felt my heart throb with every paper I removed, and soon found myself so greatly oppressed that I was forced to catch a moment's breath at the last layer.... Julie!.... O my Julie!.... the veil is rent....[152] I behold you.... I behold your divine charms! My lips and my heart pay them their first homage, my knees bend.... charms I worship, once more you will have enthralled my eyes. How quick, how potent is the magical effect of your cherished features! No, it does not take as you assert a quarter of an hour to feel it; it takes but a minute, an instant to make my bosom heave a thousand ardent sighs, and recall to mind along with your image my former happiness. Why must the joy of possessing such a precious treasure be mixed with such cruel bitterness? How powerfully it recalls times that are no more! When I look at it I think I am beholding you once more; I think I am once more living those delightful moments of which the memory now constitutes the grief of my life, given by Heaven and revoked in its anger! Alas, I am instantly disabused; all the pain of absence revives more sharply when it dispels the error that had relieved it, and I am like those wretches whose torments are interrupted only to make them more acute. Ye gods! What torrents of flame my eager eyes draw from this unexpected object! oh how it revives in my heart all the impetuous emotions your presence kindled there! O Julie, if only it were true that it could transmit to your senses the delirium and illusion of mine.... but why should it not be? Why should impressions so active in the soul not travel as far as the soul does?[153] Ah, dear lover! Wherever you are, whatever you are doing at the moment I write this letter, at the moment your portrait is receiving all that your idolatrous Lover addresses to your person, do you not feel your charming face being bathed with the tears of love and sorrow? Do you not feel your eyes, your cheeks, your lips, your breast, pressed, crushed, overwhelmed with my ardent kisses? Do you not feel your whole being inflamed with the fire of my burning lips!..... Heaven, what do I hear? Someone is coming..... Ah let us secure, hide my treasure..... an unwanted visitor!..... Cursed be the cruel man who comes to disturb such sweet transports!..... Let him never love..... or let him live far from his beloved!

LETTER XXIII
To Madame d'Orbe

It is to you, charming Cousin, that an account must be given of the Opera; for although you say nothing about it in your letters, and Julie has kept your secret, I see where she gets this curiosity. To satisfy mine, I went there once; I went back twice for your sake. Pray, consider my duty discharged after this letter. I can go back there again, yawn, suffer, perish to oblige you; but remain awake and attentive in that place, that I cannot do.

Before telling you what I think of this famous Theater, let me give you an account of what is said about it here; the judgment of connoisseurs may rectify mine if I am mistaken.

The Paris Opera passes in Paris for the most stately, the most luxurious, the most wonderful that ever human art invented. It is said to be the grandest monument of Louis XIV's magnificence. Each individual is not as free as you think to state his own opinion on this grave subject. Here anything is open to dispute except Music and the Opera, it is somewhat dangerous to want dissimulation on this single point; French music is supported by a very stern inquisition, and the first thing that is whispered by way of instruction to all foreigners who come to this country is that all foreigners agree that there is nothing so beautiful in the rest of the world as the Paris Opera.[154] Indeed, the truth is that the more discreet keep silent about it, and dare to laugh only amongst themselves.

Yet it must be agreed that not only all the marvels of nature, but many other marvels much greater still, which no one has ever seen, are there represented at great cost, and surely Pope meant to designate this strange theater with the one of which he says that Gods, leprechauns, monsters, Kings, shepherds, fairies, fury, joy, a fire, a jig, a battle, and a ball are seen jumbled together.[155]

This most magnificent and well arranged ensemble is considered as if it indeed contained all the things it represents. Seeing a temple appear one is caught up in a holy respect, and provided the Goddess is pretty, the pit[156] is half pagan. One is not as particular here as at the Comédie Française. This same audience, which is incapable of investing a Comedian with his character, is incapable at the Opera of separating an Actor from his. It seems their minds brace themselves against a reasonable illusion, and give in to it only insofar as it is absurd and crude; or perhaps Gods are easier for them to imagine than Heroes. Jupiter being of a different nature from ourselves, we can think of him whatever we wish; but Cato was a man, and how many men are entitled to believe that Cato could have existed?

The Opera therefore is not here as elsewhere a troupe of persons paid to offer themselves in spectacle to the public; it does, indeed, consist of persons whom the public pays and who offer themselves in spectacle; but all that changes its nature given that this is a Royal Academy of Music, a sort of sovereign Court which judges its own cause without appeal and otherwise bothers little with justice or fidelity.* There, Cousin, is the way in certain countries the essence of things hangs on words, and the way honest names suffice to exalt what is least honest.

The members of this noble Academy never condescend. On the other hand, they are excommunicated, which is precisely the opposite of the custom in other countries; but perhaps, having had the choice, they prefer being noble and damned, to being commoners and blessed. I have seen on stage a modern knight as proud of his trade as the unfortunate Laberius was ashamed of his,**[157] even though he was forced to do it and recited nothing but his own works. And so the ancient Laberius could not resume his place in the circus among the Roman knights, whereas the new one[158] can always find a place on the benches of the Comédie Française among the highest nobility of the land, and never was the majesty of the Roman people invoked with such respect in Rome as the majesty of the Opera is in Paris.

This much I have been able to gather from other people's talk about this brilliant spectacle; let me tell you presently what I observed there myself.

Imagine to yourself a case about fifteen feet wide, and proportionately long; this case is the stage. On the two sides, screens are interspersed, on which are sketchily painted the objects the scene is to represent. The back is a large curtain painted in like manner, and almost always pierced or torn, which represents chasms in the earth or holes in the Sky, according to the perspective. Every person who passes behind the stage and touches the curtain, produces in shaking it a sort of earthquake that is rather amusing

* Stated more openly, this would but be truer still; but in this I am an interested party, and must keep my peace. Wherever one is subject less to the laws than to men, one must know how to brook injustice.

** Forced by the Tyrant to go on stage, he deplored his fate in most touching verse, quite capable of provoking the indignation of any honorable man against this vaunted Caesar. *After living sixty years with honor*, he said, *I left home this morning a Roman knight only to return there tonight a vile Histrion. Alas, I have lived one day too long. O fortune! If I had to be dishonored one day, why didst thou not force me to when youth and vigor at least left me with an agreeable figure: but what a sad object am I now exhibiting to the dregs of the Roman people? a spent voice, a decrepit body, a corpse, a living sepulchre, which has nothing left of me but the name*. The entire prologue that he recited on this occasion, the injustice that Caesar did him, annoyed by the noble freedom with which he avenged his tainted honor, the affront he received in the circus, the baseness of Cicero in jeering at his opprobrium, the shrewd and tart reply that Laberius made; all this has been preserved for us by Aulus Gellius, and this is to me the most curious and interesting piece in his insipid collection.

to see. The Sky is represented by certain bluish tatters, suspended on sticks or ropes, like a washerwoman's clothesline. The sun, for it shows up sometimes, is a torch in a lantern. The chariots of the Gods and Goddesses are composed of four beams in a frame and suspended by a heavy rope in the form of a swing; between these beams is a crosswise plank on which the God is seated, and in front hangs a piece of heavy blotched canvas, which serves this magnificent chariot as a cloud. Near the bottom of the device can be seen the illumination of two or three stinking and ill-trimmed tallow candles, which, while the character flails about and shouts, swaying in his swing, wrap him contentedly in smoke. An incense worthy of the divinity.

As the chariots are the major element of the devices of the Opera, by it you can judge the others. The storm-tossed sea consists of long, oblique cog-wheels of canvas or blue cardboard, spiked onto parallel spits that are turned by stagehands. Thunder is a heavy cart that is rolled across the rigging loft, and it is not the least moving instrument in this agreeable music. Lightning flashes are made with a pinch of rosin tossed into a flame; the lightning bolt is a firecracker at the end of a squib.[159]

The stage is rigged with square traps that, opening as needed, signal that Demons are about to emerge from the cellar. When they are to rise into the air, little Demons of stuffed brown canvas are skillfully substituted for them, or sometimes real chimney sweeps who sway in the air suspended on ropes, until they get majestically lost in the tatters I have mentioned. But the really tragic thing is when the ropes are badly maneuvered or happen to break; for then the infernal spirits and immortal Gods fall, are maimed, sometimes killed. Add to all that the monsters that render certain scenes highly pathetic, such as dragons, lizards, tortoises, crocodiles, huge toads that stalk menacingly across the stage, and bring to the Opera the temptations of St. Anthony. Each of these figures is animated by a Savoyard dolt, who hasn't enough wit to impersonate an animal.[160]

There you have, my Cousin, more or less the composition of the Opera's august apparatus, insofar as I have been able to observe it from the pit assisted by my opera glasses; for you must not imagine that these means are very well hidden and produce an imposing effect; in this I am only telling you what I perceived on my own, and what any spectator who is not prepossessed can perceive like me. One is however told that there are a prodigious quantity of devices put to use to make all that move; I have several times been invited to a demonstration of them; but I have never been curious to see how small things are achieved with great efforts.[161]

The number of people employed by the Opera is inconceivable. The Orchestra and choruses together comprise nearly a hundred persons; there

are multitudes of dancers, all the roles are doubled and tripled,* which is to say that there are always one or two subalternate actors, ready to replace the principal actor, and paid to do nothing until he feels like taking his turn doing nothing, which never takes long to occur. After several performances, the principal actors, who are important personages, no longer honor the public with their presence; they relinquish the spot to their substitutes, and to their substitutes' substitutes. The same amount is still collected at the door, but the same performance is no longer given. Each buys his ticket as in a lottery, without knowing what his lot will be, and whatever it is no one would dare complain; for, just so you will know, the noble members of this Academy owe no respect to the public, it is the public that owes it to them.

I will not tell you about this Music; you know about it. But you could have no idea of the awful whines, the long howls with which the theater reverberates during the performance. The Actresses are seen almost in convulsions, violently forcing these yelpings from their lungs, their fists clutched against their breasts, head thrown back, face inflamed, veins bulging, stomach throbbing; one cannot say whether it is the eye or the ear that is the more disagreeably affected; their efforts cause as much suffering to those who are watching them as their singing does to those who are listening, and even more inconceivable is the fact that these howlings are almost the only thing the audience applauds. From their clapping one would take them for deaf people delighted to detect here and there occasional piercing sounds, and hoping to persuade the Actors to sing even louder. For my part, I am persuaded that they applaud an Actress's cries at the Opera as they do an acrobat's feats at the fair: the sensation produced is displeasing and painful; you suffer while they last, but it is such a relief to see them concluded without accident that you feel like manifesting your joy. Bear in mind that this manner of singing is employed to express all of Quinault's most gallant and tender passages.[162] Picture the Muses, the Graces, Cupids, Venus herself expressing themselves with such refinement, and imagine the effect! Where the devils are concerned, it is good enough, something infernal about this music is not unsuited to them. And so feats of magic, evocations of spirits, and all the rites of Sabbath[163] are always the things most admired at the French Opera.

To these lovely sounds, as in tune as they are sweet, are very worthily coupled those of the Orchestra. Imagine an endless racket of tuneless instruments, a drawn-out and perpetual purring of the Basses; the most lugubrious, most tedious I have heard in my life, and which I have never

* In Italy they do not know what understudies are: the public would not suffer them; and admission costs much less. It would be too expensive to be badly served.

been able to bear for a half-hour without getting a violent headache. All that makes for a sort of droning in which there is ordinarily neither tune nor beat. But when by chance a somewhat bouncy air comes by, there is a generalized stomping; you hear the whole pit moving to follow with great difficulty and noise a certain man in the Orchestra.*[164] Delighted to feel for a moment that rhythm they feel so faintly, they strain their ears, their voices, their arms, their feet, and their whole bodies to keep up with the beat,** which is about to outrun them, whereas the Germans and Italians who are inwardly moved by it feel and follow it effortlessly, and never need to tap it out. At least Regianino has often told me that in the Operas of Italy where it is so perceptible and so vivid one never hears nor sees the slightest movement either in the Orchestra or among the audience to mark it. But everything in this country attests the hardness of the Musical organ[165]; the voices here are harsh and wanting sweetness, the inflections sharp and strong, the notes exaggerated and drawn out; there is no rhythm, no melodious accent in the popular airs: the military instruments, the infantry fifes, the cavalry trumpets, all the Horns, all the oboes, the street singers, the cabaret fiddles are so off-pitch as to shock the least delicate ear. All talents are not given to the same men, and in general the French seem to be of all the peoples of Europe the one that has the least musical aptitude; Milord Edward asserts that the English have just as little; but the difference is that the latter know it and care not a bit, whereas the French would renounce a thousand just rights, and damn everything else, rather than concede that they are not the world's premier musicians. Some would even consider the Music in Paris as an affair of State, perhaps because it was one in Sparta to cut two strings from Timothy's lyre[166]: to that you can sense that there is no reply. However that may be, the Paris Opera might be a perfectly fine political institution, without for that offering any more pleasure to people of taste. But let us return to my description.

The Ballets, which I have yet to tell you about, are the most brilliant element of this Opera, and considered separately, are an agreeable, magnificent, and truly theatrical spectacle; but they serve as a constituent part of the play, and it is as such that they must be considered. You are familiar with Quinault's Operas; you know how divertissements[167] are used in them; it is about the same, or even worse, with his successors. In each act the action is ordinarily interrupted at the most interesting point by an entertainment offered to the seated Actors, which the pit watches standing. As a result the characters of the play are utterly forgotten, or else the audi-

* The woodcutter.

** It seems to me that the light airs of French music have been not inappropriately compared to the gait of a galloping cow, or a fattened Goose attempting to fly.

ence watches the actors who are watching something else. The manner of leading up to these entertainments is simple. If the Prince is joyous, they share in his joy, and dance; if he is sad, they wish to cheer him up, and dance. I do not know whether it is in fashion at the Court to give balls for Kings when they are out of sorts: what I know about them is this, one cannot too greatly admire their stoic constancy in watching Gavottes[168] or listening to songs, while their crown or fate is being decided upon backstage. But there are many other subjects for dances; life's gravest acts are performed while dancing. Priests dance, soldiers dance, Gods dance, Devils dance, there is dancing even at burials, and everyone dances for every purpose.

Dance is therefore the fourth of the fine arts used to make up the lyric stage: but the three others alike aspire to imitation; and what then does this one imitate?[169] Nothing. It is therefore something apart when it is used only as dance; for what are minuets, rigadoons, chaconnes in a tragedy?[170] I say further, that it would not be less out of place if it did imitate something; because of all the unities, none is more indispensable than that of language; and an Opera in which the action took place half in song and half in dance, would be even more ridiculous than one spoken half in French, half in Italian.

Not content with introducing the dance as an essential part of the lyric stage, they have even sometimes attempted to make it the principal subject, and they have Operas called Ballets, which answer so poorly to that label that the dance is not less out of place in it than in all the others. Most of these Ballets offer as many separate subjects as there are acts, and these subjects are linked together by certain metaphysical relations that the spectator would never suspect if the author had not taken care to call his attention to it in a prologue. The seasons, the ages, the senses, the elements; I ask what relation have all these labels to the dance, and what they can offer in this genre to the imagination? Some of them are even purely allegorical, like the Carnival and folly, and they are the most unbearable of all; because although quite spirited and refined, they possess neither sentiments, nor tableaux, nor situations, nor warmth, nor interest, nor anything at all to offer a foothold to music, flatter the heart, and sustain illusion. In these supposed Ballets the action is always in the song, the dance always interrupts the action or is only there incidentally and imitates nothing. All that results is that, since these Ballets hold even less interest than Tragedies,[171] this interruption is less noticed there: if these Ballets were less cold, it would create more of a shock; but one shortcoming masks another, and the Authors' art in order to prevent the dance from growing tiresome, is to find a way to make the play boring.[172]

This brings me imperceptibly to a study of what truly constitutes the lyrical drama, which is too extensive to include in this letter and would take me far from my subject; I have written on the side a little treatise about it which you will find included here, and which you can discuss with Regianino. It remains for me to tell you, about the French opera, that the greatest shortcoming I think I notice in it is a false taste for magnificence, through which they have tried to bring to the stage the supernatural, which, being made only for imagining, is as much at home in an epic poem as it is ridiculous on a stage. I would have had difficulty believing, had I not seen it, that there were artists imbecilic enough to try imitating the Sun's chariot, and spectators childish enough to go see that imitation. La Bruyère could not conceive how a spectacle as proud as the Opera could bore him at such expense.[173] I can well conceive it, I who am not a La Bruyère, and I maintain that for any man who is not devoid of taste for the fine arts, French music, dance, and the supernatural mixed together will always make the Paris Opera the most boring spectacle in all existence. After all, perhaps the French need none more perfect than this one, at least insofar as the performance is concerned; not that they are not quite capable of knowing when it is what it should be, but because in this what is bad entertains them more than what is good. They would rather scoff than applaud; the pleasure of criticizing compensates for the boredom of the spectacle, and they find it more agreeable to mock it when they are no longer there than to enjoy it while they are.

LETTER XXIV

From Julie

Oh yes, I see indeed; the fortunate Julie is still dear to you. That same flame that used to burn in your eyes can be felt in your last letter; I recognize in it all the ardor that inspires me, and by it my own is again stirred up. Indeed, my friend, in vain does fate separate us, let us press our hearts against each other, let us through communication conserve their natural heat against the cold of absence and despair, and may all that should slacken our attachment serve only to make it ever more fast.

But admire my innocence; since receiving this Letter, I have felt some of the enchanting effects it describes, and this banter about the Talisman, even though I myself invented it, continues to appeal to me and appear to me as a truth. A hundred times a day when I am alone I suddenly start as though I felt you near to me. I imagine that you are holding my portrait, and I am so crazy that I think I am feeling the touch of the caresses and the

kisses you are giving it: my lips think they are receiving them, my tender heart thinks it is tasting them. O flattering illusions! O fantasies, last resort of the wretched! Ah, if it can be done, stand us in stead of reality! You still represent something to those for whom happiness no longer exists.

As for how I went about obtaining the portrait, that is indeed a labor of love; but be persuaded that if it were true that love can work miracles, this is not the one it would have chosen. Here is the key to the enigma. A while back we had a miniature painter who came from Italy; he had letters from Milord Edward, who perhaps in giving them to him had in mind something of what was to take place. Monsieur d'Orbe wanted to take advantage of the opportunity to have my Cousin's portrait; I wanted it too. She and my Mother wanted mine, and at my request the painter secretly made a second copy. Then without minding which was the original or the copy, I adroitly chose the best likeness of the three to send to you. That was a bit of larceny over which I did not greatly scruple; for a little likeness more or less hardly matters to my Mother and my Cousin; but the homage you would pay to a face other than mine would be a sort of infidelity the more dangerous to the degree my portrait was prettier than I, and I do not want you by whatever means to acquire a taste for charms I do not possess. Besides, had it been up to me I should have been a bit more decently dressed; but I was not listened to, and my father himself wanted the portrait to remain as it is. I pray you at least to believe that except for the headdress, that attire was not drawn after mine, that the painter improvised it all and that he enhanced my person with the works of his imagination.

LETTER XXV

To Julie

I must, dear Julie, speak to you once more about your portrait; no longer in that first enchantment to which you reacted so strongly; but on the contrary with the regret of a man abused by a false hope, and whom nothing can compensate for what he has lost. Your portrait has grace and beauty, even some of your own; it is a pretty good likeness and painted by a skilled man, but to be satisfied with it, one would have not to know you.

I fault it in the first place for looking like you without being you, for having your face and being inanimate. Vainly has the painter supposed he could render your eyes and features exactly; he has not rendered that sweet sentiment that gives them life, and without which, charming as they are, they would be nothing. It is in your heart, my Julie, that your face's fard is to be found and such a one cannot be imitated. This is due, I admit, to the

insufficiency of art; but the artist is at least to blame for not being exact in all that lay within his power. For example, he placed your hairline too far from the temples, which lends a less pleasant contour to the forehead and less subtlety to the eyes. He has neglected the purple branches created in that location by two or three small veins under the skin, rather like those of the irises we were observing one day in the garden at Clarens. The color in the cheeks is too close to the eyes, and does not blend delightfully into rose lower in the face as on the model. One would take it for an artificial rouge[174] plastered like the carmine of the women in this country. This defect is not trivial, for it renders your eyes less gentle and your attitude more bold.

But, tell me, what did he do with those two nestfulls of cupids[175] hidden in the corners of your mouth, and which in my days of fortune I sometimes went so far as to warm with mine? He did not give these corners all their grace, and did not give this mouth the pleasant and serious touch that changes all at once at your slightest smile, and brings to the heart some unknown enchantment, some sudden rapture that nothing can express. It is true that your portrait cannot change from serious to smiling. Ah! it is precisely of that I am complaining: in order to express all your charms, you would have to be painted at every instant of your life.

Let us forgive the Painter for leaving out some of your beauties; but he did your face no less injury by leaving out the flaws. He did not render that almost imperceptible spot you have under the right eye, nor the one that is on the left side of the neck.[176] He did not put in.... ye Gods, was this man made of bronze?.... he neglected the little scar you still have under the lip. He made your hair and eyebrows the same color, which is not so: the eyebrows are more chestnut, and the hair more ash-blond.

Bionda testa, occhi azzurri, e bruno ciglio.[177]

Blond hair, blue eyes and brown eyelashes.

He has made the lower face exactly oval. He did notice that slight inflection that, separating the chin from the cheeks, makes their contour less regular and more graceful. Those are the most noticeable flaws, he has left out many others, and I strongly resent him for it; for it is not only your beauties I am in love with, but of every bit of you just as you are. While you do not want the brush to lend you anything, I do not want it to take anything away, and my heart cares as little for charms you do not possess, as it is jealous of what takes their place.

As for the attire, I will let it pass all the less for the fact that, dressed or casual, I always saw you done up in much better taste than you are in your portrait. The headdress is overdone; I will be told that there is nothing but

flowers: well, these flowers are unneeded. Do you remember that ball where you wore your Valaisan costume,[178] and where your Cousin told you I danced like a philosopher? You had no headdress other than a long plait of your hair rolled about your head and attached with a golden needle, like the Village women of Bern.[179] No, the Sun clad in all its beams has not the brilliance with which you dazzled eyes and hearts, and surely anyone who saw you that day will never forget you in his whole life. It is thus, my Julie, that your hair must be done; it is the gold in your hair that must adorn your face, and not this rose which hides it and which your complexion causes to wither. Tell the Cousin, for I recognize her care and choice, that these flowers with which she covered and profaned your hair are not in better taste than the ones she gathers in *Adone*, and that they can be allowed to make up for beauty, but not hide it.

With respect to the bust, it is singular for a lover to be more rigid on this point than a father, but indeed I do not find that you are dressed decently enough. The portrait of Julie must be modest as she is herself. Love! thou alone knowest these secrets. You say the painter drew it all from his imagination. Now that I believe, I believe indeed! Ah, had he glimpsed the least of those veiled charms, his eyes would have devoured it, but his hand would not have attempted to paint them; why should his foolhardy art have attempted to invent them? It is not only a breach of propriety, I maintain that it is in addition a lack of taste. Indeed, your face is too chaste to tolerate the disorder of your breast; it is obvious that one of these two objects must preclude the appearance of the other; only the delirium of love can reconcile them, and when its eager hand dares to unveil the one that modesty conceals, the ecstasy and the disorder in your eyes then says that you are paying it no mind and not that you are exposing it.

Such is the critique that sustained attention has led me to make of your portrait. Thereupon I conceived the design of correcting it in line with my opinions. I explained them to a skilled painter, and judging by what he has already done, I hope soon to see you more like yourself. For fear of spoiling the portrait we try out the alterations on a copy I had him make, and he transfers them to the original only once we are quite sure of their effect. Although I am only a passable draughtsman, this artist never tires of admiring the subtlety of my observations; he does not understand how much more knowledgeable the master who dictates them to me is than he. Sometimes I also appear to him a bit odd: he says I am the first lover who ever got it into his head to conceal objects that to others' taste are never exposed enough, and when I reply that it is the better to see all of you that I clothe you so carefully, he looks at me as though I were crazy. Ah! How much more touching your portrait would be if I could invent the means of

having it show your soul alongside your face, and depict at once your modesty and your charms! I swear to you, my Julie, they will gain much by this revision. Before one could see only those the painter had supposed, now the observer's emotions will suppose them as they are. I know not what secret enchantment reigns in your person; but everything that touches you seems to partake of it; all it takes is to glimpse a portion of your dress to worship its wearer. One can tell, by looking at your attire, that it is in every place the veil of graces concealing beauty: and the tastefulness of your modest adornment seems to proclaim to the heart all the charms it harbors.

LETTER XXVI

To Julie

Julie! O Julie! O you whom I once dared to call mine, and whose name I today profane! the pen slips from my trembling hand; my tears drench the paper; I can barely trace the first characters of a letter that should never have been written; I can neither keep silent nor speak! Come, honorable and cherished image, come purify and fortify a heart defiled by shame and broken by repentance. Shore up my failing courage; give my remorse the strength to confess the involuntary crime your absence allowed me to commit.

What scorn you are going to have for a guilty man, yet far less than I have myself! However abject I may become in your eyes, I am a hundred times more so in my own; for seeing myself such as I am, what still humiliates me the most is to see you, feel you in the depths of my heart, in a place now so little worthy of you, and remind myself that the memory of love's truest pleasures was not able to preserve my senses from a trap without bait, and a crime without charms.

Such is the excess of my mortification that in appealing to your mercy, I even fear to sully your eyes with these lines with the confession of my evil deed. Forgive, pure and chaste soul, a tale I would spare your modesty were it not a means of expiating my distractions; I am unworthy of your goodness, I know; I am vile, base, despicable; but at least I shall be neither false nor deceitful, and I would rather you took your heart from me than to mislead you a single moment. For fear of being tempted to look for excuses that would only make me more criminal, I shall limit myself to giving you a detailed account of what has befallen me. It will be as sincere as my regret; that is all I will allow myself to say in my defense.

I had made the acquaintance of some Officers of the guard, and other

young men from among our countrymen,[180] in whom I found a natural merit, which I regretted seeing spoiled by the imitation of I know not what false airs that are not right for them. They in turn mocked me for retaining in Paris the simplicity of ancient Helvetic manners. They took my maxims and my manners as indirect remonstrances that shocked them, and resolved to make me change my tone at whatever cost. After several attempts that met with no success, they made one better contrived that worked only too well. Yesterday morning, they came and proposed that we go have supper at the home of a Colonel's wife whose name they cited, and who, from the report of my good behavior, was, they said, desirous of making my acquaintance. Dumb enough to be taken in by this persiflage, I objected that it would be better first to pay her a call, but they mocked my scruple, saying that Swiss candor did not call for such formality and that such ceremonious manners would succeed only in giving her a poor opinion of me. At nine o'clock we therefore went to this Lady's place. She came to receive us in the staircase; which I had not yet seen done anywhere. Upon entering I saw in chimney sconces old candles that had just been lit, and overall a certain affected air that pleased me not at all. The mistress of the house seemed pretty to me, although a bit over the hill; other women of about the same age and of similar appearance were with her; their rather showy finery was more flashy than tasteful; but I have already remarked that this is a point by which in this country one can hardly judge a woman's condition.

The first greetings took place as almost everywhere; with experience of the world one learns to foreshorten them, or turn them to cajolery before they become boring. It was not quite that way once the conversation became general and serious. It seemed to me I could detect in these ladies a constrained and uneasy air, as if this tone were not their customary one, and for the first time since I have been in Paris, I saw women hard pressed to sustain a reasonable discussion. To find an easy topic, they launched into their family affairs, and as I knew not one of them, each said of hers whatever she wished. Never had I heard so much talk about Monsieur the Colonel; which astonished me in a country where the custom is to call people more by their names than by their titles, and where men who bear that particular title usually possess others too.[181]

This false dignity soon gave way to more natural manners. They began to chat in low voices, and resuming unawares a familiar and not very decent tone, they whispered, they smiled, looking my way, while the Lady of the house questioned me on the state of my heart in a resolute tone that was hardly conducive to winning it. We were served, and the liberties taken at table, which seem to lump all the estates together, but in fact put each

one in his place without his realizing it, confirmed my suspicion about the sort of place I was in. It was too late to back out. Therefore taking security in my repugnance, I devoted this evening to my function as observer, and decided to apply to learning about this order of women the only opportunity I would have in my life to do so. I drew little profit from my observations; they had so little notion of their present state, so little thought for the future, outside the jargon of their trade, they were so stupid in every respect, that scorn soon cancelled the pity I first felt for them. In discussing pleasure itself, I saw they were incapable of feeling any. They seemed to me to have a tremendous craving for anything that could tempt their avarice: aside from that, I heard not a single word leave their mouths that came from the heart. I wondered at how honest people could bear such disgusting company. It would have been imposing a cruel punishment on them, in my opinion, to condemn them to the kind of life they themselves chose.

Meanwhile the supper went on and was getting noisy. For want of love, wine excited the diners. The talk was not amorous, but immodest, and the women tried to arouse through the disarray of their attire the desires that should have caused it. At first, all that had only the opposite effect on me, and all their efforts to seduce me succeeded only in repelling me. Sweet modesty! said I to myself, supreme attraction of love; what charms a woman loses, the moment she renounces thee! how careful they would be, if they knew thine empire, to preserve thee, if not out of honesty, at least out of coquetry! But modesty cannot be feigned. No artifice is more ridiculous than the one that tries to imitate it. What a difference, I was also thinking, from the coarse impudence of these creatures and their licentious jokes to those timid and passionate glances, those words full of modesty, of grace, of sentiment, with which.... I dared not go on; I blushed at these unworthy comparisons.... I reproached myself as so many crimes those charming memories that pursued me despite myself.... In what a place was I presuming to think of her.... alas! Unable to remove this too dear image from my heart, I attempted to veil it.

The noise, the things I heard said, the objects that met my eyes gradually heated my senses; the women on either side of me continually addressed provocations to me which finally went too far for me to remain cool. I could feel my head starting to swim; I had all along drunk my wine very diluted, I put in still more water, and finally decided to drink straight water. Only then did I notice that this supposed water was white wine, and that I had been fooled the whole meal long. I did not make objections which would only have made me a laughing stock; I stopped drinking. It was too late; the damage was done. Drunkenness quickly took away what little consciousness I had left. I was surprised, when I came to, to find my-

4. Shame and remorse avenge love profaned.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

self in a distant chamber, in the arms of one of those creatures, and at the same instant I experienced the despair of feeling as guilty as I could possibly be....[182]

I have come to the end of this awful narrative; may it never again sully your eyes or my memory. O you from whom I await my sentence, I implore you to make it harsh, I deserve it. Whatever my punishment may be, it will seem to me less cruel than the memory of my crime.

LETTER XXVII

Reply

You may rest easy on your fear of having vexed me. Your letter has caused me more pain than anger. It is not I, but you whom you have offended through a disorder in which the heart had no part. I am only the more afflicted for that. I would rather see you commit an outrage against me than defile yourself, and the harm you do to yourself is the only kind I cannot forgive you.

To consider only the fault for which you feel ashamed, you find yourself far more guilty than you are; and I see little more than imprudence to blame you for on this occasion. But this goes further back and stems from a deeper root which you do not perceive, and which friendship must expose for you.

Your first error is to have taken the wrong path on entering the world; the further you go, the further you go astray, and I tremble to observe that you are lost if you do not retrace your steps. You are allowing yourself to be led insensibly into the trap I had feared. The coarse lures of vice were unable to seduce you at first, but bad company has begun by deluding your reason in order to corrupt your virtue, and is already making on your morals the first test of its maxims.

Although you have told me nothing particular about the relationships you have formed in Paris, it is easy to get an idea of those you frequent from your letters, and of those who show things to you from your manner of seeing them. I have not disguised how little I approved of your friends; you have continued in the same manner, and my displeasure has only grown. In truth one would think these letters were the sarcasms of a coxcomb,*[183] rather than the relations of a philosopher, and it is hard to believe they come from the same hand as those you used to write to me.

* Sweet Julie, for how many reasons will you make them hiss you! How is this! your tone is not even up to date. You are unaware that there are coquettes, but there are no more coxcombs. Good Lord, what then do you know?

What! you presume to study men in the dainty manners of a few coteries of précieuses[184] or people with nothing to do, and this superficial and changeable veneer which should have been scarcely worth your notice, forms the basis of all your commentaries! Was it worth your trouble to collect with such care practices and etiquettes that will no longer exist ten years from now, whereas the timeless motives of the human heart, the secret and lasting play of the passions evade your inquiry? Let us consider your letter on women, what would I find there that can teach me to know them? Some description of their finery, of which everyone is informed; some malevolent observations on their manner of dressing and carrying themselves, some idea of the disorder of a small number, unjustly generalized; as if all honest sentiments were extinct in Paris, and all women there travelled in carriages and sat in the first loges. Have you told me anything in the way of solid information about their tastes, their maxims, their true character, and is it not quite strange that in speaking of a country's women, a wise man should have neglected what has to do with domestic cares and the education of children?* The only thing that seems to be your own in that whole Letter, is the pleasure with which you praise their good natural disposition and which does yours honor. And even then you thereby have done no more than justice to the sex in general; and in what country on earth are gentleness and commiseration not women's endearing portion?

What a different tableau if you had painted for me what you had seen rather than what you were told, or at least, had you consulted only reasonable people! Must you, who have taken such pains to preserve your sense of judgment, lose it as if on purpose in the frequentation of thoughtless youth, who in the company of the wise seek only to seduce them and not to imitate them. You heed false conformities of age which do not befit you, and you forget those of enlightenment and reason which are intrinsic to you. Despite all your impetuosity you are the most malleable of men, and despite the maturity of your mind, you let yourself be led to such a point by those whose company you keep that you are unable to mingle with people of your age without decreasing in age and becoming a child again. Thus you degrade yourself while thinking you are well matched, and not to choose friends wiser than you is to demean yourself.

I do not reproach you for being led unknowingly into a house of disrepute; but I reproach you for being led there by young Officers with whom you should not have been acquainted, or at least to whom you should not

* And why would he not have neglected it? Are such cares a concern of theirs? Oh illustrious Authors, brilliant Academicians, what would become of the world and the State, what would become of you all, if women were to give up the government of literature and business, to take up that of their homes?

have left the conduct of your entertainment. As for your ambition to lead them back to your principles, to me that indicates more zeal than prudence; if you are too serious to be their comrade, you are too young to be their Mentor, and you should undertake to reform others only when you have nothing more to achieve within yourself.

A second, still graver fault and much less forgivable, is to have been able to spend the evening willingly in a place so little worthy of you, and not to have fled from the first instant you knew what house you were in. On that score your excuses are pitiful. *It was too late to back out*![185] As if there were some sort of etiquette in such places, or etiquette should ever win out over virtue, and it were ever too late to avoid doing wrong! Of the security you took in your repugnance, I shall say nothing, the outcome has taught you how well founded it was. Speak more frankly with her who can read what is in your heart: it was shame that held you back. You feared they would mock you on your way out; a moment's jeers frightened you, and you preferred exposing yourself to remorse rather than to derision. Do you realize the maxim you observed on this occasion? That one that first introduces vice into a well-born soul, muffles the voice of conscience with public clamor, and represses the boldness to do right with fear of disapproval. One man who would overcome temptations succumbs to bad examples; another blushes at being modest and becomes impudent out of shame, and this false shame corrupts more honest hearts than do false inclinations.[186] This above all is the reason you should preserve your own heart; for whatever you do, the very fear of ridicule which you scorn nonetheless overpowers you despite yourself. You would rather brave a hundred perils than derision, and such timidity coupled with so intrepid a soul has never before been seen.

Without expounding against this weakness precepts of morality that you know better than I, I shall be content to propose a means of protecting you from it, simpler and surer, perhaps, than all the reasonings of philosophy. It is to perform in your mind a slight transposition of time, and anticipate the future by a few minutes. If at this wretched supper you had steeled yourself against an instant of mockery on the diners' part, with the idea of the state your soul would be in as soon as you reached the street; if you had imagined the inner contentment of escaping from the traps of vice; the advantage of adopting from the outset the habit of overcoming that facilitates the power to do so; the pleasure that awareness of your triumph would have given you, the pleasure of describing it to me, the pleasure I myself would have taken in it; can it be believed that all this would not have won out over a moment's repugnance, to which you would never

have yielded if you had thought about the consequences? Moreover, what is this repugnance that places a value on the derision of people whose esteem can have no value at all? Unfailingly this reflection would have, for a moment of false shame, spared you a shame much more just, more lasting, the regrets, the danger, and to disguise nothing from you, your friend would have shed a few less tears.

You desired, you say, to use that evening to advantage for your function as observer? What curiosity! What a role! How ashamed of you your excuses make me! Will you not one day be just as eager to observe thieves in their Dens, and see how they go about robbing passers-by? Are you not aware that there are objects so hateful that a respectable man is not even allowed to look on them, and that the indignation of virtue cannot bear the spectacle of vice? The wise man observes the public disorder he cannot prevent; he observes it, and reveals by his sad countenance the grief it causes him; but as for individual disorders, he opposes them or averts his eyes, lest his presence be taken for approval. Was it necessary, moreover, to see such companies in order to acquire a notion of what goes on in them and the kinds of things that are said there? For my part, from their very topic more than from the little you have told me about it, I easily guess all the rest, and the thought of the pleasures to be found there tells me enough about the people who seek them.

I do not know whether your convenient philosophy already adopts the maxims which are said to prevail in the large cities in favor of tolerating such sorts of places; but I hope at least that you are not among those who think so little of themselves that they will indulge in their use, under the pretext of some putative necessity known only to loose-living people, as if the two sexes were on this point of different natures, and as if in absence or celibacy, the honorable man needed resources the honorable woman did not. If this error does not lead you to the prostitutes, I greatly fear it may continue to lead you astray yourself. Ah! If you insist on being contemptible, do it at least without pretext, and do not compound boozing with lies. None of those pretended needs has its source in nature, but in the willful depravity of the senses. The very illusions of love are purified in a chaste heart, and corrupt only the heart that is already corrupted. Purity on the contrary is self-sustaining; desires constantly repressed become accustomed to not returning, and temptations are multiplied only by the habit of succumbing to them. Friendship has twice made me overcome my repugnance to treat such a subject, this time will be the last; for by what right might I hope to obtain from you what you would refuse to honesty, love, and reason?

I return to the important point with which I began this letter. At twenty-one you wrote me grave and judicious descriptions from the Valais; at twenty-five you send me frilly little letters from Paris, in which sense and reason are everywhere sacrificed to a certain light turn, far removed from your character. I do not know how you have done this; but ever since you have been living in the land of talents, yours appear diminished; you had improved among the peasants, and you regress among the wits. It is not the fault of the country you are living in, but of the acquaintances you have made there; for nothing requires so much discernment as the admixture of the best and the worst. If you would study the world, then cultivate the reasonable people who know it from long experience and tranquil observation, not young scatterbrains who see nothing but its surface, and absurdities they themselves invent. Paris is full of learned men accustomed to reflection, for which that great theater affords them a subject every day. You will not make me believe that those grave and studious men run like you from house to house, from coterie to coterie, to entertain women and young men, and turn all philosophy to babble. They have too much dignity so to degrade their station, prostitute their talents, and support by their example manners they should correct. Even if most of them did, surely many do not, and these are the ones you should seek out.

Is it moreover not odd that you should yourself give in to the same flaw with which you reproach modern comic authors, that for you Paris should be populated solely by people of condition; that those of your own estate should be the only ones you do not even mention; as if you had not paid dearly enough for the vain prejudices of the nobility to despise them, and you thought you would be degraded by frequenting the honest bourgeoisie, who are perhaps the most respectable order in the Country where you are? No use trying to put the blame on Milord Edward's acquaintances[187]: with them you would soon have made others of an inferior order. So many wish to climb, that it is always easy to descend, and by your own admission the only way of knowing the authentic manners of a people is to study its private life among the most populous stations; for to rest content with people who are forever playing a role, putting on airs, is to see nothing but Comedians.

I would wish your curiosity went yet further. Why in a City so rich is the populace so miserable, whereas extreme misery is so rare among us where there are no millionaires to be found? This question, it seems to me, is entirely worthy of your inquiry; but it is not with those whose company you keep that you must expect to resolve it. Gilded apartments are where a schoolboy goes to learn the airs of the world; but the wise man learns its

secrets in the poor man's cottage. It is there that are conspicuously to be found the obscure maneuvers of vice, which it covers over in social circles with prettified words; it is there one learns of the secret iniquities with which the powerful and rich snatch a remnant of black bread from the oppressed they publicly claim to pity. Ah, if I am to believe our veterans, what things you would learn in sixth-floor attics that are buried in deep secrecy in the palaces of the Faubourg St. Germain, and how many fast talkers would be confounded with their feigned humanitarian maxims if all the wretched they have created turned up to give them the lie!

I know that we dislike the spectacle of misery we cannot relieve, and that even the rich man averts his eyes from the poor man he refuses to succor; but it is not simply money that the unfortunate need, and it is only those lazy about doing good who do not know how to do it without purse in hand. Consolations, counsels, attentions, friends, protection are so many resources that commiseration accords you for want of wealth, for the relief of the indigent. Often the oppressed are oppressed merely because they lack a voice to make their complaints heard. Sometimes it is just a matter of a word they cannot say, a reason they know not how to proffer, the door of a Grandee through which they cannot enter. The bold support of disinterested virtue is enough to lift a multitude of obstacles, and the eloquence of a man of honor can frighten Tyranny amidst all its power.

If then you wish to be truly a man, learn to come back down. Humanity flows like a pure and salutary stream, and goes on to fertilize lowlands; it always seeks its level, it leaves dry the arid rocks that threaten the countryside and yield nothing but harmful shade or fragments to crush their neighbors.

That, my friend, is how one can benefit from the present while taking instruction for the future, and how kindness profits in advance from the lessons of wisdom, so that even if no use were found for the understanding acquired, we should not for that have wasted the time spent in acquiring it. He who must live among the highly placed can never use too much prophylaxis against their poisonous maxims, and only the continual practice of beneficence can protect the best hearts from the contagion of the ambitious. Take my advice, give this new kind of study a try; it is worthier of you than those you have embraced, and since the mind shrinks as the soul becomes corrupt, you will soon sense, on the contrary, how much the practice of sublime virtues elevates and sustains one's genius; how much a tender interest in others' misfortunes serves better to discover their source, and to keep us far in every way from the vices that have produced them.

I owed you all the candor of friendship in the critical situation in which

to me you seem to be, lest a second step in the direction of disorder finally plunge you in irrevocably, before you have time to get hold of yourself. Now I cannot hide from you, my friend, how much your prompt and sincere confession has moved me; for I sense how greatly the shame of this admission has cost you, and consequently how much the shame of your fault weighed on your heart. An involuntary error is easily forgiven and forgotten. As far as the future is concerned, remember this maxim from which I shall not deviate: Whosoever can twice deceive himself in such a case, was not deceived even the first time.

Farewell, my friend; look carefully to your health,[188] I implore you, and bear in mind that there must remain no trace of a crime I have forgiven.

P. S. I have just seen in Monsieur d'Orbe's hands copies of several of your letters to Milord Edward, which oblige me to retract a portion of my strictures on the subject matter and style of your observations. These treat, I concede, important subjects, and strike me as being full of grave and judicious reflections. But on the other hand, it is clear that you greatly disdain us, my Cousin and me, or that you are very unconcerned for our esteem, in sending us only relations so likely to diminish it, whereas you write much better ones for your other friend. It seems to me it does little honor to your lessons to judge your pupils unworthy of admiring your talents; and you should feign, if only out of vanity, to think us capable of understanding you.

I admit that politics hardly falls within women's competence, and my Uncle has so wearied us with it that I understand how you might have feared to do likewise.[189] Nor is it, frankly speaking, the pursuit to which I would give my preference; its usefulness is too removed from me to affect me much, and its insights are too sublime to strike my eyes strongly. Obliged to love the government under which heaven caused me to be born, I little care whether others are better. What good would it do me to know about them, with so little power to establish them, and why should I sadden my soul with the contemplation of such great evils about which I can do nothing, so long as I see others around me which I am at liberty to relieve? But I love you; and the interest I do not take in the subject matter I do take in the Author who treats of it. I take in with tender admiration all the proofs of your genius, and proud of a merit so worthy of my heart, I ask love to give me only as much cleverness as I need to appreciate yours. Do not therefore refuse me the pleasure of knowing and loving all your good deeds. Do you mean to inflict on me the humiliation of believing that if Heaven united our destinies, you would not deem your companion worthy of thinking alongside you?

LETTER XXVIII

From Julie

All is lost! All is discovered! I no longer find your letters in the place where I had hidden them. They were still there yesterday evening. They could only have been taken today. Only my mother can have discovered them. If my father sees them, my life is finished![190] Oh, what would be the use of his not seeing them, if I must give up.... Ah God! My mother sends for me. Where shall I flee? How shall I bear her looks? If only I could hide in the bosom of the earth!.... My whole body quakes, and I am unable to take a single step.... shame, humiliation, stinging reproaches.... I have deserved it all, I will bear it all. But the grief, the tears of a weeping mother.... O my heart, what anguish!.... She awaits me; I cannot delay further.... she will want to know.... I will have to tell everything.... Regianino will be dismissed. Write me no more until you hear from me.... who knows if ever.... I could.... what, lie?.... lie to my mother.... Ah, if I must save us by lying, farewell, we are lost!

End of Part Two.

Part Three

LETTER I

From Madame d'Orbe

What sufferings you inflict on those who love you! What tears you have already caused to flow in an unfortunate family whose peace you alone trouble! Beware compounding our tears with mourning: beware lest the death of an afflicted mother be the ultimate effect of the poison you pour into her daughter's heart, and lest a disorderly love finally become even for you the source of an endless remorse. Friendship has led me to bear your errors so long as a shadow of hope could sustain them; but how could I tolerate a futile constancy that honor and reason condemn, and which, no longer capable of causing anything but unhappiness and grief, deserves only the name of stubbornness?

You know how it came about that the secret of your flame, so long hidden from my aunt's suspicions, was revealed to her by your letters. However telling such a blow may be to this tender and virtuous mother, less irritated at you than at herself, she blames only her blind negligence; she deplores her fatal illusion; what hurts her most cruelly is the thought that she had had too high an opinion of her daughter, and her grief is to Julie a punishment a hundred times worse than her reproaches.

The despondency of this poor Cousin is beyond imagining. It has to be seen to be understood. Her heart seems suffocated with affliction, and the excess of the sentiments that oppress her lends her an air of stupefaction more frightening than sharp cries. She stays day and night on her knees at her mother's bedside, absently, her eyes riveted to the ground, keeping an absolute silence; serving her with more attention and intensity than ever; then suddenly falling back into a state of prostration that makes her appear a different person. Very clearly it is the mother's illness that maintains the daughter's strength, and if eagerness to serve her did not quicken her zeal, her vacant eyes, her pallor, her extreme dejection would make me fear lest she herself have great need of the care she is providing her mother. My aunt too perceives this, and I see from the anxiousness with which she privately recommends her daughter's health to me how much the heart of each struggles against the constraint they mutually impose, and how you must be hated for troubling so perfect a union.

This embarrassment is further exacerbated by the care taken to shield it from the eyes of an irascible father from whom a mother trembling for her daughter's life wishes to withhold this dangerous secret. We make it a rule to maintain our former familiarity in his presence; but although a mother's tenderness is happy to take advantage of this pretext, an embarrassed daughter dares not surrender her heart to caresses she deems forced and which are all the more cruel to her that she would find them sweet if she dared to trust them. When receiving her father's caresses, she looks at her mother in such a tender and humiliated way that her heart seems to be saying through her eyes: ah if only I were still worthy of receiving as much from you!

Madame d'Étange has several times taken me aside, and I have easily recognized from the gentleness of her reprimands and the tone in which she spoke of you that Julie has taken great pains to calm her only too justified indignation toward us, and has spared nothing to justify both of us at her own expense. Even your letters bear besides the character of an excessive love a sort of excuse which she has not failed to detect; it is less you she reproaches for abusing her confidence than herself for her simpleness in according it to you. She has enough regard for you to believe that no other man in your situation would have held out better than you; she blames your faults on virtue itself. She now can conceive, she says, how it is that overly vaunted rectitude does not necessarily prevent an honorable man in love from corrupting, if he can, a virtuous daughter, and unscrupulously dishonoring a whole family to satisfy a moment's frenzy. But what purpose is served by reliving the past? We must hide this odious secret behind an everlasting veil, expunge, if we can, its slightest trace, and second the bounty of Heaven which has left no visible evidence of it. The secret is confined to six trustworthy persons. The peace of mind of all those you have loved, the life of a mother in despair, the honor of a respectable house, your own virtue, all still depend on you; all dictate your duty; you can repair the harm you have done; you can make yourself worthy of Julie and justify her fault by renouncing her; and if your heart has not deceived me only the magnitude of such a sacrifice can answer to the magnitude of the love that demands it. Grounded on the high regard I always had for your sentiments, and on what strength the tenderest union that ever was should add to it, I have promised in your name all that you must fulfill; dare give me the lie if I have overestimated you, or be this day all you must be. You must immolate your mistress or your love the one to the other, and prove yourself the most cowardly or most virtuous of men.

This unfortunate mother meant to write you; she had even begun. O God, what thrusts of the dagger her bitter cries would have delivered you! How her moving reproaches would have rent your heart! How her hum-

ble prayers would have filled you with shame! I have ripped to pieces that crushing letter which you would never have been able to bear: I could not stand the consummate horror of seeing a mother humiliated before her daughter's seducer: you are worthy at least to be spared such means, which would appease monsters and kill with grief a sensible man.

If this were the first exertion love had required of you, I could doubt of success and be unsure of the regard you deserve: but the sacrifice you have made to Julie's honor by leaving the country is a token to me of the one you will make to her peace of mind by breaking off a pointless relationship. The first acts of virtue are always the most painful, and you will not lose the reward for an exertion that has cost you so much, by insisting on maintaining a futile correspondence the risks of which are formidable for your lover, the compensations nil for both of you, and that only prolongs fruitlessly the torments of the one and the other. Have no more doubt, that Julie whom you cherished so must be nothing to the one she has loved so much; in vain do you close your eyes to your misfortunes: you lost her the moment you severed yourself from her. Or rather Heaven had taken her from you even before she gave herself to you; for her father engaged her as soon as he came back, and you know too well that the word of that unbending man is irrevocable. In whatever manner you proceed, invincible fate opposes your wishes, and you will never possess her. The sole choice still left to you is to precipitate her into an abyss of woes and opprobrium, or to honor in her what you have worshipped, and restore to her, in lieu of happiness lost, prudence, peace, security at least, of which your fatal liaisons deprive her.

How saddened you would be, how consumed by regrets, if you could behold the present condition of this unhappy friend, and the abasement to which remorse and shame have reduced her! How dimmed is her luster! how languishing are her graces! how sadly all her charming and gentle sentiments merge into the single one that absorbs them! Even friendship becomes lukewarm as a result; barely does she still share the pleasure I take in seeing her, and her sick heart can no longer feel anything but love and pain. Alas, what has become of that loving and sensible character, that pure taste of hers for honest things, that tender concern of hers for the pains and pleasures of others? She is still, I admit, gentle, generous, compassionate; the endearing habit of doing good she cannot possibly lose; but it has become merely a blind habit, an unreflected taste. She does all the same things, but she no longer does them with the same zeal; those sublime sentiments have waned, that divine flame has died down, that angel has become just an ordinary woman. Ah what a soul you have stolen from virtue!

LETTER II
To Madame d'Étange

Consumed with a grief that will last as long as I live, I fall at your feet, Madame, not to express a repentance my heart cannot command, but to expiate an involuntary crime by renouncing all that could have made my existence blissful. Just as human sentiments never came close to those your adorable daughter inspired in me, there never was a sacrifice like the one I bring to the most respectable of mothers; but Julie has too well taught me how happiness must be immolated to duty; she has too bravely set me an example, for me to be unable at least once of imitating her. If my blood were enough to cure your sufferings, I would spill it silently and regret I was offering you a too feeble proof of my zeal: but to break the sweetest, purest, most sacred bond that ever united two hearts, ah that is an effort all creation would not have forced me to make, and which you alone had the power to obtain!

Yes, I pledge to live far from her for as long as you so require; I shall abstain from seeing her and writing to her; I swear on your precious life, so essential to the preservation of hers. I submit, not without terror, but without murmur to whatever you see fit to command concerning her and me. I shall even go much farther: her happiness can console me for my misery, and I shall die content if you give her a husband worthy of her. Ah, just find him! And let him dare say to me, I shall love her better than you! Madame, in vain will he have everything I lack; if he has not my heart he will have nothing for Julie: yet I have nothing but this honest and tender heart. Alas, I have nothing either. Love, which diminishes distance, does not elevate the person; it elevates only the sentiments. Ah! Had I dared listen only to mine for you, how many times when speaking with you would my mouth have uttered the sweet name of mother?

Deign to put confidence in vows that will not be vain, and in a man who is not deceitful. If I was once capable of abusing your esteem, I deceived myself first. My inexperienced heart did not recognize the danger until it was too late to flee, and I had not yet learned from your daughter that cruel art of overcoming love with love itself, which she has so well taught me since. Banish your fears I beg of you. Is there anyone on earth to whom her peace of mind, her felicity, her honor are dearer than to me? No, my word and my heart are your warrant of the commitment I am making in the name of my illustrious friend[1] as well as in mine. No indiscretion will be committed, be assured of that, and I shall breathe my last sigh without anyone knowing what pain ended my days. Ease therefore

the pain that consumes you and makes mine even sharper: dry tears that wrench my soul; regain your health; restore to the tenderest daughter that ever was the happiness she has forfeited for you; be happy yourself through her; live, finally, to give her love for life. Ah despite the errors of love, to be Julie's mother is still an enviable enough lot to rejoice in living!

LETTER III

To Madame d'Orbe

Enclosing the preceding letter

Here, cruel woman, here is my reply. When you read it, melt in tears if you know my heart and yours can still be touched; but above all, do not browbeat me any longer with that merciless esteem you make me pay so dearly for and which you turn into the torment of my life.

So your brutal hand has dared to break those sweet ties formed under your very eyes almost from childhood, ties that your friendship seemed to share with such pleasure? Then I am as unhappy as you want and as I can be. Ah! Do you know the extent of the harm you are doing? Are you aware that you are wresting away my soul, that there is no compensation for what you are taking from me, and that it is a hundred times better to die than to cease to live for each other? How can you speak to me of Julie's happiness? Can there be happiness without contentment of the heart? How can you speak to me of the danger her mother is in? Ah what is a mother's life, my life, yours, even hers, what is the existence of the whole world in comparison with the delightful sentiment that used to unite us? Insane, fierce virtue! I obey thy voice without merit; in all I am doing for thee I abhor thee. What are thy vain comforts against the sharp pains of the soul? Away, sorry idol of the wretched, thou dost but compound their misery, when thou takest from them what resources fortune leaves to them. Yet I shall obey, yes cruel woman, I shall obey: I shall become, if I can, insensible and fierce like you. I shall forget all that was dear to me on earth. I wish no more to hear or utter Julie's name or yours. I wish no longer to recall the unbearable memory of them. A spite, an unyielding rage embitters me against so many setbacks. Hard obstinacy will stand me in stead of courage: I have paid too high a price for being sensible; it is better to renounce humanity.

LETTER IV

From Madame d'Orbe

You have written me a dismaying letter; but there is so much love and virtue in your conduct that it cancels the bitterness of your complaints: you are too generous for anyone to have the courage to quarrel with you. Whatever rage he lets show, when one is thus able to immolate himself to his beloved he merits more praise than reproach, and despite your insults, you were never so dear to me as you are now that I have come fully to appreciate your true worth.

Give thanks to that virtue you think you hate, and which does more for you than your love itself. You have even won over my aunt through a sacrifice whose cost she fully appreciates. She could not read your letter without emotion; she even had the weakness to let her daughter see it, and the effort poor Julie made to contain her sighs and tears while reading it caused her to fall into a faint.

This tender mother, whom your letters had already powerfully moved, is beginning to understand thanks to everything she sees how greatly your two hearts surpass the common rule, and how much your love bears a natural character of sympathy that neither time nor human efforts could ever destroy. She who has such need of comfort would gladly comfort her daughter if propriety did not hold her back, and I see her too near to becoming her confidante not to forgive me for having been so. She forgot herself yesterday to the point of saying in her presence, perhaps somewhat indiscreetly,* Ah if it were only up to me..... although she held back and did not go on, I saw from the burning kiss Julie pressed on her hand that she had only too well understood her. I even know that she has several times wanted to speak to her inexorable husband; but, whether because of the danger of exposing her daughter to the wrath of an angry father, or out of fear for herself, her timidity has always held her back, and her weakness, her sufferings, are so noticeably increasing that I fear I shall see her in no condition to carry out her resolution by the time she has fully decided upon it.

However that may be, despite the faults of which you are cause, that honesty of heart that can be felt in your mutual love has given her such an opinion of you that she trusts the word of you both as to the interruption of your correspondence and has taken no precaution for overseeing her

* Claire, are you less indiscreet here? Is this the last time you will be?

daughter more closely; indeed, if Julie did not prove worthy of her confidence, she would no longer merit her attentions, and you both ought to be strangled if you were capable of further deceiving a most excellent mother, and abusing the high regard she has for you.

I am not seeking to rekindle in your heart an expectation that I myself do not entertain; but I want to show you, since it is true, that the most honest choice is also the most prudent, and if there can be some resort remaining to your love, it lies in the sacrifice honor and reason impose on you. Mother, relatives, friends, all are now on your side, except for a father whom we shall win over by this means, or whom nothing could win over. Whatever imprecation a moment of despair may have caused you to utter, you have a hundred times proven to us that there is no surer path to happiness than that of virtue. If one reaches happiness, it is purer, more substantial, and sweet thanks to virtue; if one fails, virtue alone can provide consolation. So take heart once more, be a man and be yourself again. If I have well understood your heart, the cruellest way for you to lose Julie would be through unworthiness to obtain her.

LETTER V

From Julie

She is no more. My eyes have seen hers close forever; my lips have received her last sigh; my name was the last word she uttered; her last glance was toward me. No, it was not life she seemed to be quitting; I had lacked the art of endearing it to her. It was me alone she was tearing herself from. She saw me devoid of guidance and hope, overwhelmed by my woes and my faults: dying was nothing to her, and her heart murmured only at abandoning her daughter in this condition. She had only too much reason. What had she to regret on earth? What down here could equal in her eyes the immortal reward for her patience and virtues that awaited her in Heaven? What more was there for her to do in the world except to grieve for my disgrace? Pure and chaste soul, worthy spouse, and incomparable mother, now you live in the abode of glory and felicity; you live; and I, condemned to repentance and despair, forever bereft of your care, your counsel, your gentle caresses, am dead to happiness, to peace, to innocence: I can feel nothing now but your loss; I can see nothing now but my shame; my life is nothing now but sorrow and suffering. My mother, my tender mother, alas I am more dead than you!

Oh God! What transport leads an unfortunate maiden astray and

causes her to forget her resolutions? To whom am I coming to shed my tears and utter my cries of grief? The cruel one who caused them is the very one to whom I confide them! He in whom consist my life's misfortunes is the very one with whom I dare lament them! Aye, heartless man, share the torments you make me suffer. You because of whom I plunged a knife into a mother's breast, grieve for the harm I have received from you, and feel with me the horror of a parricide that was your handiwork. To whose eyes would I dare appear as despicable as I am? Before whom would I abase myself as my remorse would require? Who could know it well enough but the accomplice of my crime? My most unbearable torture is that my heart alone indicts me, and to see attributed to my good character the impure tears extracted from me by bitter repentance. I saw, with dread I saw how suffering poisoned, hastened my sad mother's last days. In vain did her pity for me prevent her from admitting as much, in vain did she affect to attribute the progress of her illness to the cause that had produced it; in vain has my Cousin, won over to the cause, maintained the same language. Nothing has availed to fool my heart torn with regret, and for my everlasting torment I shall carry to the grave the awful thought of having shortened the life of her to whom I owe mine own.

O you whom Heaven called forth in its wrath to make me wretched and criminal, for the last time receive into your bosom tears of which you are the cause. I no longer come, as before, to share with you woes that were to have been common to us. These are the sighs of a final farewell which escape me in spite of myself. Everything is over; the empire of love is ended in a soul entirely abandoned to despair. I dedicate the rest of my days to mourning my most excellent mother; I shall learn to sacrifice to her sentiments that have cost her her life; I would be too glad if overcoming them proved sufficiently painful to expiate all the sufferings they caused her. Ah, if her immortal spirit reaches into the depths of my heart, it knows full well that the victim I am sacrificing to it is not utterly unworthy of her! Share in an effort you have made necessary for me. If you still have some respect for the memory of so dear and so fatal a bond, I invoke it to implore you to flee me forever, never to write to me, not to make my remorse more acute, to let me forget, if that is possible, what we were to each other. Let my eyes never see you more; let me never more hear your name spoken; let your memory come no more to trouble my heart. I venture once more to speak in the name of a love that must no longer be; do not add to so many causes of suffering that of seeing its last wish scorned. Farewell then for the last time, unique and dear.... Ah foolish maid.... forever farewell.

LETTER VI

To Madame d'Orbe

At last the veil is rent; that long illusion has vanished away; that hope so sweet has gone out; all I have left to feed an everlasting flame is a bitter and delightful memory that sustains my life and prolongs my torments with the vain sentiment of a happiness that is no more.

Is it then true that I have tasted supreme felicity? Am I truly the same being who once was happy? Is one who can feel what I suffer not born to suffer always? Can one who once enjoyed the things I have lost, lose them and yet live, and can sentiments so contrary take root in one and the same heart? Days of pleasure and glory, no, you were not for a mortal! you were too fair to have to be perishable. A sweet ecstasy absorbed your whole duration, and concentrated it into a point like the duration of eternity. There was for me neither past nor future, and I tasted all at one time the delights of a thousand centuries. Alas! You have disappeared like a flash! That eternity of happiness was but an instant in my life. Time has slowed down again in the moments of my despair, and tedium metes out in long years the unfortunate remainder of my days.

To make them even more unbearable, the more afflictions overwhelm me, the more those I cherished seem to detach themselves from me. Madame, it may be that you still love me; but other cares call you, other duties occupy your time. My complaints that you used to listen to with interest are now indiscreet. Julie! Julie herself is losing courage and abandoning me. Sullen remorse has chased away love. Everything is changed for me; my heart alone is still the same, and my fate is only the more awful for it.

But what does it matter what I am and what I must be? Julie suffers, is this the time to be thinking of myself? Ah, it is her pains that make mine more bitter. Yes, I would rather she ceased to love me and were happy.... Cease to love me!.... does she hope to?.... Never, never. It is futile for her to forbid me to see her and write to her. It is not torment she is getting rid of; it is, alas, the consoler! Must the loss of a tender mother deprive her of a tenderer friend? Does she think she can relieve her woes by multiplying them? O love! Is it at thy expense that nature can be avenged?

No, no; in vain does she mean to forget me. Can her tender heart ever sever itself from mine? Do I not still possess it despite her? Does one forget sentiments such as we have felt, and can one remember them without feeling them anew? Victorious love became her life's misfortune; van-

quished love will make her only more pitiable. She will spend her days in grief, tormented both by vain regrets and vain desires, unable ever to satisfy either love or virtue.

Do not believe however that while deprecating her errors I dispense myself from respecting them. After so many sacrifices, it is too late to learn to disobey. Since she commands, that suffices; she will hear no more of me. You can tell how awful is my fate. My greatest despair is not renouncing her. Ah! In her heart are my cruellest sufferings, and I am more unhappy for her misfortune than for mine. You whom she loves more than anything, and who alone, next to me, know how to love her worthily; Claire, sweet Claire, you are the only possession left to her. Precious enough it is to make bearable the loss of all the others. Compensate her for the consolations she is deprived of and those she refuses; let a sacred friendship fill at once the place of a mother's tenderness, of a lover's, of the charms of all the sentiments that would have made her happy. Let her be happy if she can, whatever it may cost. Let her recover the tranquillity and peace of mind I have taken from her; I shall suffer less the torments she has left to me. Since I am henceforth nothing in my own eyes, since my fate is to spend my life dying for her; let her regard me as no longer existing, I consent to it if that idea puts her more at peace. May she find again at your side her first virtues, her first happiness! May she yet be through your care all she would have been without me!

Alas! She was a daughter, and is now motherless! That is the loss that cannot be repaired, for which there is no consolation for someone who knows she was to blame. Her troubled conscience asks her to give back that tender and beloved mother, and in such cruel suffering, horrible remorse compounds her affliction. O Julie, were you meant to know that awful sentiment? You who were witness to the illness and last moments of that unfortunate mother, I beg you, I implore you, tell me how I should understand it. Rend my heart if I am responsible. If suffering for our faults brought her to the grave, we are two monsters unworthy to live; it is a crime to envisage such fatal ties, to see the light of day is a crime. No, I dare to believe that so pure a flame has not produced such grim effects. Love inspired in us sentiments too noble to derive from them the misdeeds of denatured souls. Could Heaven, could Heaven be unfair, and did she who had the strength to sacrifice her happiness to those who gave her life deserve to cost them their lives?

LETTER VII
Reply

How could one love you less while thinking more highly of you by the day? How would I lose my former sentiments for you whilst each day you deserve new ones? No, my dear and worthy friend; everything that we all were to each other from our earliest youth, we shall be the rest of our days, and if our mutual attachment no longer grows, that is because it no longer can. The only difference is that I used to love you as my brother, and now I love you as my child; for although we are both younger than you and even your disciples, I consider you somewhat as ours. While teaching us to think, you have learned sensibility from us, and no matter what your English Philosopher[2] says, such schooling is as good as the other; if it is reason that makes man, it is sentiment that guides him.

Do you know why I seem to have changed my conduct toward you? It is not, believe me, that my heart is not still the same; it is because your condition is changed. I favored your flame as long as there lingered a ray of hope. Now that by persevering in your aspiration for Julie, you can but make her unhappy, to humor you would be a disfavor to you. I prefer to know you are less pitiable, and make you more discontent. When it becomes impossible to be happy together, is not seeking one's own happiness in the happiness of one's beloved all that remains to love devoid of hope?

You do more than feel that, my generous friend; you carry it out in the most painful sacrifice a faithful lover ever made. By renouncing Julie, you purchase her peace of mind at the price of yours, and it is yourself you are renouncing for her.

I hardly dare impart to you the strange thoughts that occur to me on that subject; but they are comforting, and that makes me bold. First of all, I believe that genuine love fully as much as virtue has the advantage of compensating for whatever is sacrificed to it, and in a way one enjoys the self-imposed deprivations thanks to the very sentiment of their cost and of the motive that leads one to make them. You will bear witness to yourself that Julie was loved by you as she deserved to be, and you will love her the more for it, and you will be the happier. That exquisite †self-love that repays all stern virtues will mingle its charm with that of love.[3] You will say to yourself, I know how to love, with a more lasting and delicate pleasure than you would experience by saying, I possess the one I love. For the latter diminishes with use; but the former remains always, and you would still enjoy it, even if you no longer loved.

Moreover, if it be true, as Julie and you have so often told me, that love

is the most delightful sentiment that can enter the human heart, then anything that prolongs and fixes it, even at the cost of a thousand sufferings, is still a blessing. If love is a desire that is whetted by obstacles as you also used to say, it is not good that it should be satisfied; it is better for it to endure and be unhappy than flicker out in the bosom of pleasures. Your flame, I confess, has weathered the test of possession, time, absence, and all sorts of woes; it has overcome all the obstacles except the most powerful of all, which is to have no more obstacles to overcome, and feed only on itself. The whole world has never seen a passion weather this test, what right have you to hope that yours would have? Time would have compounded the disaffection of a prolonged possession with advancing age and declining beauty; it seems to become fixed to your advantage through your separation; you will always be for each other in the flower of your youth; you will see each other endlessly as you did when you parted, and your hearts united to the grave will prolong in an enchanting illusion your youth along with your love.

Had you not been happy, you might be tormented by insurmountable restlessness; your heart would sigh for the benefits it deserved; your ardent imagination would endlessly ask you for those you had not obtained. But love has no delights it has not showered upon you, and to speak as you do, you have exhausted in the space of one year the pleasures of an entire lifetime. Remember that Letter so passionate, written on the morrow of a daring tryst. I read it with an emotion that was new to me: in it one does not find the stable condition of a soul that has been moved; but the ultimate delirium of a heart burning with love and drunk with sensuality. You yourself concluded that one could not experience such transports twice in one lifetime, and that after experiencing them once, one had to die. My friend, that was the high point, and whatever fortune and love could have done for you, your flame and your happiness could henceforth only decline. That instant was also the beginning of your trials, and your lover was taken from you at the moment when you had no more new sentiments to savor with her; as if fate had wanted to spare your heart from inevitable exhaustion, and leave you in the remembrance of your pleasures past a pleasure sweeter than all those you could yet enjoy.

Be comforted then for the loss of a possession that would have escaped you anyway and would moreover have robbed you of the one you still have. Happiness and love would have vanished at the same time; at least you have preserved sentiment; one does not lack pleasures when one still loves. The sight of spent love frightens a tender heart more than that of an unhappy love, and disaffection for what one possesses is a condition a hundred times worse than regret for what one has lost.

If my disconsolate Cousin's reproaches to herself over her mother's death were founded, this cruel memory would, I admit, poison that of your days of love, and such an ominous thought should end them forever; but do not believe what her sufferings say, for they deceive her; or rather, the imaginary motive with which it pleases her to exacerbate them is but a pretext to justify their excess. That tender soul always fears she grieves too little, and it is a sort of pleasure for her to add to the sentiment of her pains whatever can render them more acute. She is misleading herself, be sure of that; she is not sincere with herself. Ah! if she quite sincerely believed she had cut short her mother's life, could her heart bear the awful remorse? No, no, my friend; she would not be weeping for her, she would have followed her. The illness of Madame d'Étange is well known; it was a dropsy of the chest[4] which she could not recover from, and we despaired for her life even before she had discovered your correspondence. It was a terrible grief for her; but what pleasures atoned for the injury it might do her! How consoling it was for that tender mother to see, while grieving for her daughter's faults, how many virtues redeemed them, and to be forced to admire her soul while weeping for her weakness! How sweet it was to her to feel how much she was loved! What indefatigable zeal! What ceaseless care! What unfailing attention! What despair for having afflicted her! How many regrets, how many tears, how many touching caresses, what inexhaustible sensibility! Everything the mother suffered could be read in her daughter's eyes; it was she who served her by day, who sat up with her by night; it was from her hand that all assistance was received: you would have thought it was another Julie you were seeing; her natural frailty had disappeared, she was strong and robust, the hardest tasks were nothing to her, and her soul seemed to give her a new body. She did everything and seemed to be doing nothing; she was everywhere and did not leave her side. She was constantly to be found on her knees beside her bed, her lips pressed to her hand, bewailing either her fault or her mother's illness, and merging these two sentiments to make herself grieve even more. I saw no one enter my aunt's room in the final days who was not moved to tears by the most moving of all sights. We could see the effort both of these hearts were making to draw closer to each other at the moment of a fatal separation. We could see that solely the regret of parting preoccupied mother and daughter, and that living or dying would have meant nothing to them if they had been able to stay or go together.

Far from adopting Julie's gloom, be assured that all that can be expected of human assistance and the heart's consolations has contributed on her part to stemming the progress of her mother's illness, and that infallibly her tenderness and her care have preserved her longer than we

could have without her. My aunt herself told me a hundred times that her last days were the sweetest moments in her life, and that her daughter's happiness was the only thing lacking to her own.

If her loss had to be attributed to grief, that grief goes further back, and it is her husband alone who must be blamed. Long inconstant and philandering, he lavished his youthful flames on a thousand objects less worthy of pleasing than his virtuous companion; and when age had brought him back to her, he maintained toward her that unyielding roughness with which unfaithful husbands regularly compound their offenses. My poor Cousin was affected by this. A vain infatuation over noble birth and that rigidity of character that nothing can bend are the cause of your misfortunes and hers. Her mother who always had an inclination for you, and who divined her love when it was too late to snuff it out, long secretly bore the pain of not being able to overcome either her daughter's taste or her husband's obstinacy, and of being the original cause of an evil she could no longer remedy. When the discovery of your letters had apprised her how far you had abused her confidence, she feared lest she lose all by trying to save all, and jeopardize her daughter's life in order to restore her honor. Several times she sounded out her husband without success. Several times she was about to risk an entire confidence and show him the full extent of his duty, terror and her timidity always held her back. She hesitated while she was still able to speak; when she was ready it was too late; her strength failed her; she died with the fatal secret, and I who know the humor of this strict man without knowing to what extent the sentiments of nature might have tempered it, I breathe easy, seeing that at least Julie's life is secure.

There is nothing about this that she does not know, but shall I tell you what I think of her apparent remorse? Love is more ingenious than she. Filled with longing for her mother, she wishes she could forget you, and it stirs her conscience despite herself, forcing her to think about you. It insists that her tears have some relation to him she loves. She would no longer dare concern herself with him directly, it nonetheless forces her to, at least through her repentance. It deceives her so artfully that she prefers to suffer even more and that you enter into the subject of her torments. Your heart does not detect, perhaps, these twists of hers, but for that they are none the less natural; for your love although of equal strength on both sides is not similar in its effects. Yours is ebullient and animated, hers is gentle and tender: your sentiments are vehemently vented outwardly, hers return toward her, and by penetrating the substance of her soul gradually denature and change it. Love quickens and sustains your heart, it wilts and oppresses hers; all its springs are unwound, her strength is sapped, her courage spent, her virtue powerless. Such a number of heroic faculties are

not obliterated but suspended: a moment of crisis can restore all their vigor or wipe them out irrevocably. If she takes one more step toward discouragement, she is lost; but if that excellent soul arises for an instant, it will be greater, stronger, more virtuous than ever, and there will be no question of relapse. Take it from me, my gentle friend, in this perilous condition learn to respect what you once loved. Everything she receives from you, even what goes against you, can only be fatal to her. If you beleaguer her, you may easily triumph; but you will think in vain that you possess the same Julie, you will never find her again.

LETTER VIII

From Milord Edward

I had acquired certain rights to your heart; you were necessary to me, and I was about to come join you. What to you are my rights, my needs, my solicitude? I am forgotten by you; you no longer bother to write to me. I have been told how solitary and unsociable you have been of late; I divine your secret intentions. You are weary of life.

Die then, foolish youth; die, fierce yet cowardly man: but do know as you die that you leave behind in the soul of an honorable man who cherished you, the grief of having merely served an ingrate.

LETTER IX

Reply

Come, Milord; I was convinced I could never again know pleasure on earth: but we shall meet again. You cannot think that I could be among the ingrates: your heart is not of a sort that can inspire ingratitude, nor mine of a sort to be ungrateful.

NOTE

From Julie

It is time to renounce the errors of youth and abandon a misleading hope. I shall never be yours. Give me back then the freedom I engaged to you, and of which my father intends to dispose; or else crown my miseries with a refusal that will undo us both without being of any use to you.

Julie d'Étange

LETTER X

From the Baron d'Étange

In which was the preceding Note

If there can remain in the soul of a suborner the least sentiment of honor and humanity, answer this note from an unfortunate maiden whose heart you have corrupted, and who would be no more if I dared suspect that she had forgotten herself more than that.[5] I will not be greatly surprised should the same philosophy that taught her to throw herself at the first passer-by also teach her to disobey her father. Yet think on it. I prefer in every circumstance to use the paths of moderation and honesty when I hope they may suffice; but although I am willing to take them with you, do not believe I do not know how the honor of a Gentleman is avenged, when he is offended by a man who is not one.[6]

LETTER XI

Reply

Spare yourself, Monsieur, vain threats that frighten me not at all, and unjust reproaches that cannot humiliate me. Know that between two persons of the same age there is no suborner but love, and that it will never be in your power to demean a man whom your daughter once honored with her esteem.

What sacrifice dare you impose on me and by what right do you exact it? Is it to him who caused all my woes that I must sacrifice my last hope? I mean to respect Julie's father; but let him accept to be mine if I must learn to obey him. Nay, nay, Monsieur, whatever opinion you may have of your acts, they do not oblige me to renounce for your sake rights so dear and so well deserved by my heart. You are the cause of my life's misery; I owe you nothing but hatred, and you have no claim to make on me. Julie has spoken; there is my consent. Ah! may she always be obeyed! Another will possess her, but because of it I shall be worthier of her.

If your daughter had deigned to consult me about the bounds of your authority, do not doubt that I would have taught her to resist your unjust pretensions. Whatever may be the empire you are abusing, my rights are more sacred than yours; the chain that binds us is the boundary of paternal power, even before the tribunals of men, and when you dare to appeal to nature, you alone are defying her laws.

Do not invoke, either, that quaint and delicate honor that you talk

about avenging; no one is offending it but yourself. Respect Julie's choice and your honor is secure; for my heart honors you despite your indignities, and despite gothic maxims the alliance of one honorable man will never bring dishonor to another. If my presumption offends you, avenge yourself on my life, I will never defend it against you; besides, I care very little what a gentleman's honor consists in; but when it comes to that of a man of honor, it is my own, I know how to defend it, and I will keep it pure and spotless to my last breath.

Go ahead, heartless father so undeserving of so sweet a name, plot terrible parricides, whilst a tender and submissive daughter sacrifices her happiness to your prejudices. Your regrets will avenge me one day for the injuries you do me, and you will realize too late that your blind and denatured hatred was not less fatal to you than to me. I shall be miserable, no doubt; but if ever the voice of blood arises in the depths of your heart, how much more will you be for having sacrificed to fantasies the single fruit of your loins; single on earth in beauty, in merit, in virtue, and for whom Heaven, generous with its gifts, neglected nothing but a better father!

Note

Included in the preceding letter

I yield back to Julie d'Étange the right to dispose of herself, and to give her hand without consulting her heart.

S. G.[7]

LETTER XII

From Julie

I meant to describe to you the scene that just took place, and resulted in the note you must have received; but my father took measures so well calculated that it ended only a moment before the departure of the post. His letter doubtless reached the post office in time; such cannot be the case for this one; your resolution will already have been taken and your reply sent off before it reaches you; thus any details would henceforth be pointless. I have done my duty; you will do yours: but fate overwhelms us, honor betrays us; we shall be separated forever, and the consummate horror is that I shall pass into the..... Alas! I might have spent my life in yours! O duty, of what use art thou? O providence!.... We must moan and hold our peace.

The pen falls from my hand. I had been poorly for several days; this morning's session has prodigiously shaken me.... my head and heart ache.... I feel faint.... Could it be that Heaven is taking pity on my sufferings?.... I can no longer hold myself up.... I am obliged to take to bed, and I take comfort in the hope I will never arise from it. Farewell, my one and only love. Farewell, for the last time, dear and tender friend of Julie. Ah! If I must no longer live for you, have I not already ceased to live?

LETTER XIII

From Julie to Madame d'Orbe

Is it true then, dear and cruel friend, that you are recalling me to life and my suffering? For one happy moment I thought I was about to rejoin the tenderest of mothers; your inhuman care has put me in chains so I will mourn her longer, and when the desire to follow her pulls me away from earth, the regret of leaving you keeps me here. If there is a consolation in my remaining alive, it lies in the hope I have not wholly escaped death. Gone now are my face's lovely features that have cost my heart so dearly: the illness from which I am recovering has delivered me from them. This fortunate loss will forestall the coarse desires of a man so lacking in delicacy to dare marry me without my consent. No longer seeing what he liked in me, he will care little about the rest. Without breaking my word to my father, without offending the friend to whom he owes his life, I will be able to repel this importunate man: my mouth will keep silence, but my appearance will speak for me. His revulsion will protect me against his tyranny, and he will find me too ugly to condescend to making me miserable.

Ah, dear Cousin! You were once acquainted with a heart more constant and tender, which would not have been thus repelled. Its taste was not restricted to features and to countenance; it was me he loved and not my face. Our whole being united us with each other, and so long as Julie was the same, beauty could flee, love would still have remained. And yet he found it in him to consent... the ingrate!... he had to, since I found it in me to require it of him. Who holds to their word those who want to take back their heart? Have I then meant to take back mine?... have I done so?... O God! Must everything constantly bring back to my mind a time that is no more, and a flame that must be no more? In vain do I wish to rip that cherished image from my heart; I feel it is too firmly attached; I tear my heart without dislodging it, and my efforts to efface so sweet a memory only engrave it deeper.

Dare I tell you about a delirium arising from my fever, which, far from

waning with it torments me even more since my recovery? Yes, know and pity your unhappy friend's distraction of mind, and thank Heaven for preserving your heart from the horrible passion that brings it. In one of the moments when I was the most dangerously ill, I thought during the time my fever rose that I saw that unfortunate at my bedside; not as he enchanted my eyes during my life's brief happiness; but pale, drawn, unkempt, and with despair in his eyes. He was on his knees; he took one of my hands, and not being repelled by its condition, not fearing the communication of such a horrible venom, he was covering it with kisses and tears. When I saw him I experienced that intense and delightful emotion which his unexpected presence used to give me. I lunged toward him; I was held back; you plucked him from my presence, and what moved me the most intensely, was his moans which I thought I heard as he disappeared.

I cannot depict for you the astounding effect this dream has had on me. My fever was long and violent; I lost consciousness for several days; I have often dreamed of him in my transports; but none of these dreams has left such deep impressions in my imagination as this last one. It is such that I cannot erase it from my memory and my senses. At every minute, at every instant I imagine I am seeing him in the same posture; I still see vividly his appearance, his dress, his gesture, the sadness in his eyes: I imagine I am feeling his lips pressing my hand; I feel it being wetted by his tears; the sounds of his plaintive voice make me shudder; I see him being drawn far from me; I make an attempt to hold on to him still: everything retraces to me an imaginary scene with more force than the events that have actually befallen me.

I have long hesitated to reveal this to you; shame prevents me from doing it by mouth; but my agitation, far from calming down, only increases from day to day, and I can no longer resist the need to confess my madness to you. Ah! Let it take complete possession of me. Would I could utterly lose my mind, since the little I have left serves only to torment me!

I return to my dream. My Cousin, mock me, if you will, for my simplemindedness; but there is something indescribably mysterious in this vision that distinguishes it from ordinary delirium. Is it an omen of this excellent man's death? Is it an intimation that he is already departed? Does Heaven deign for once to guide me, and invite me to follow the one it made me love? Alas! For me the summons to die will be the first of its blessings.

It does me no good to remember all those vain speeches with which philosophy amuses people who feel nothing; they no longer impress me, and it is clear to me that I despise them. One does not see spirits, I accept that: but is there not a way in which two souls so tightly united could have an immediate communication between them, independent of the body

and the senses? Might not the direct impression one receives from the other transmit it to the brain, and receive from it in return the sensations it has given to it?..... poor Julie, what outlandish notions! How credulous the passions make us; and how hard it is for a deeply moved heart to relinquish the very errors it detects!

LETTER XIV

Reply

Ah, too unhappy and too sensible girl, were you then born only to suffer? I would in vain wish to spare you misery; you seem to seek it out endlessly, and your star[8] is more powerful than all my care. To so many real reasons for misery at least do not add illusions; and since my discretion is more harmful than helpful to you, abandon an error that torments you; the sad truth will perhaps be even less cruel. Know then that your dream is not a dream; that it is not the ghost of your friend that you have seen, but his person; and that this touching scene constantly present to your imagination actually took place in your room the second day after you were the most dangerously ill.

The day before, I had left you rather late, and Monsieur d'Orbe who wished to relieve me at your side for that night was about to leave, when all of a sudden we saw this unfortunate fellow enter in a rush and throw himself at our feet in a pitiful state. He had taken the post-chaise upon receiving your last letter. Pressing on day and night he covered the distance in three days, and never stopped until the last post, waiting until night to enter the city. I am ashamed to own to you that it took me longer than it did Monsieur d'Orbe to throw my arms around him: without knowing yet the reason for his journey, I could foresee its consequence. So many bitter memories, the danger you were in, his own, the disorder I saw him in, all this poisoned such a sweet surprise, and I was too much under the shock to heap caresses on him. Yet I held him with a heartache he shared, and which made itself mutually felt through silent hugs more eloquent than cries and tears. His first word was: *How is she? Ah how is she? Give me life or death*. I understood then that he was informed of your illness, and believing that he also was not unaware what sort it was, I spoke with no other precaution than to reduce the danger. The moment he learned that it was smallpox he uttered a cry and fell in a swoon. Weariness and lack of sleep combined with anxiety of mind had cast him into such exhaustion that it took a long time to bring him out of it. He was scarcely able to speak; we put him to bed.

Overcome by nature, he slept twelve hours running, but with such agitation that this kind of sleep must have rather exhausted than renewed his strength. The morrow, a new problem; he absolutely insisted on seeing you. I objected to him the danger of provoking a revolution[9] in you; he offered to wait until there was no more risk; but even his tarrying itself was a frightful risk; I tried to make him see that. He cut me off sharply. Keep your cruel eloquence to yourself, he said indignantly: you put it to too much use to my ruin. Do not expect you can get rid of me again the way you did when I was exiled. I would come a hundred times from the ends of the earth to see her a single instant: but I swear by the author of my being,[10] he added impetuously, that I will not leave here without seeing her. Let us find out once and for all whether I will make you feel pity, or you will make a liar of me.

His decision was made. Monsieur d'Orbe was of the opinion we should find ways of satisfying him, so as to send him away before his return was discovered; for it was known in the household to Hanz alone whom I could trust, and in front of the servants we had called him by a name different from his own.*[11] I promised him he would see you the next night, on condition that he remain only an instant, that he not speak to you, and that he depart again the next morning before daybreak. I demanded his word for it; then I was at ease, I left my husband with him, and returned to your side.

I found you much improved, the eruption was complete; the doctor restored my courage and hope. I concerted in advance with Babi, and the renewed fever, though less acute, leaving you again somewhat confused,[12] I took this opportunity to clear everyone out and notify my husband to bring his guest, figuring that before the end of the bout you would be less able to recognize him. We had all the trouble in the world getting rid of your disconsolate father who every night insisted on staying by you. Finally, I told him angrily that he was sparing no one the trouble, that I was equally determined to sit up, and that he knew very well, father or no, that his tenderness was not more vigilant than mine. He left regretfully; we remained alone. Monsieur d'Orbe arrived about eleven, and told me he had left your friend in the street; I fetched him. I took him by the hand; he was trembling like a leaf. As we entered the antechamber his strength failed him; he had difficulty breathing, and was obliged to sit down.

Then making out several objects in the dim glow of a distant light, yes, he said with a deep sigh, I recognize the very place. Once in my life have I passed through it.... at this very hour,.... in the very same secrecy.... I was trembling as today... my heart pounded the same way... what temerity! I

* We see in part four that this substitute name was *St. Preux*.

5. The inoculation of love.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

was mortal, and I dared taste.... what am I going to discover now in this very sanctuary where everything bespoke the sensual delight that intoxicated my soul? In this very loved one who caused and shared my transports? The image of death, the instruments of suffering, virtue in distress, and beauty expiring!

Dear Cousin, I spare your poor heart the detail of this touching scene. He saw you, and held his tongue. So he had promised; but what silence! He dropped to his knees; sobbing, he kissed your curtains; he lifted his hands and eyes upward; he uttered muted wailings; he could hardly contain his pain and his cries. Without seeing him, you mechanically extended one of your hands; he grabbed it with a sort of frenzy; the burning kisses he planted on that diseased hand aroused you better than the sound and voice of everyone around you. I saw that you had recognized him, and despite his resistance and murmurs, I wrested him from your room at that instant, hoping to pass the notion of such a short apparition under the pretext of delirium. But seeing subsequently that you said nothing about it, I thought you had forgotten it, I forbade Babi to mention it to you and I know she has kept her word. Vain prudence which love has unravelled, and which merely allowed to ferment a memory it is now too late to erase!

He left as he had promised, and I made him swear that he would not tarry in the neighborhood. But, my dear, that is not all; I must finish telling you what in any event you could not long fail to learn. Milord Edward passed through two days later; he went on hastily to overtake him; he caught up with him in Dijon, and found him ill. The unhappy fellow had contracted the smallpox. He had not told me he had never had it, and I had taken him to you without precaution. Unable to heal your disease, he meant to share it. Remembering the way he kissed your hand, I cannot doubt that he inoculated himself deliberately. He could not be worse prepared; but it was the inoculation of love,[13] it turned out well. This father of life preserved the life of the tenderest lover there ever was; he is cured, and according to Milord Edward's last letter they should by now have left again for Paris.

All that, too sweet Cousin, should help banish the gruesome terrors that needlessly alarmed you. You have long since renounced your friend's person, and his life is secure. Therefore attend only to preserving your own and to acquitting yourself gracefully of the sacrifice your heart has promised to a father's love. Cease finally to be the plaything of a vain hope and to feed on fantasies. You are rather too hasty in taking pride in your ugliness; be more humble, believe me, you still have but too much reason for it. You have weathered a vicious attack, but your visage has been spared. What you take for scars are only a rash that will soon fade away. It treated

me worse than that, and yet you see that I am still not too bad. My angel, you will remain pretty despite yourself, and will the impassible Wolmar whom three years' absence could not cure of a love conceived in a week's time, be cured when he has you before his eyes at every hour? Oh if your only expedient is to repel, how desperate is your fate!

LETTER XV

From Julie

Enough, enough. Friend, you have overcome. I am not proof against such love; my resistance is exhausted. I have used all my strength, my conscience bears consoling witness to that. Let Heaven not ask me to account for more than it has given me. This sad heart which you purchased so many times and at such cost to your own belongs to you without reservation; it was yours from the first moment I laid eyes on you; it will remain yours to my last breath. You have too well deserved it to lose it, and I am weary of serving an illusory virtue at the expense of justice.

Yea, tender and generous lover, your Julie will always be yours, she will always love you: it must be so, I wish it so, it is my duty. I restore to you the empire love has given you; it will never again be taken from you. In vain does a deceitful voice murmur deep in my soul; it will no longer mislead me. What are the vain duties with which it counters those of loving forever what Heaven has caused me to love? Does not the most sacred of all concern you? Is it not to you alone that I have promised all? Was not my heart's first wish never to forget you, and is not your inviolable fidelity a new bond for my own? Ah! in the transport of love that restores me to you, my only regret is for having resisted sentiments so dear and so legitimate. Nature, O sweet nature, take back all thy rights! I abjure the heartless virtues that obliterate thee. Will the inclinations thou gavest me be more deceitful than a reason that so often led me astray?

Respect these tender inclinations, my gentle friend; you owe them too much to hate them; but suffer their dear and sweet partition; suffer the rights of blood and friendship not to be supplanted by those of love. Do not think that in order to follow you I shall ever abandon the paternal household. Do not hope that I shall resist the bonds that a sacred authority imposes on me.[14] The cruel loss of one of those who gave me life has too well taught me to shy away from afflicting the other. No, she from whom he expects his only consolation from now on shall not add sorrow to his worry-laden soul; it shall not be said that I have brought death to all who gave me life. No, no, I know my crime and am incapable of hating it.

Duty, honor, virtue, none of this has any meaning left for me; yet I am not a monster; I am frail and not denatured. My decision is made, I do not wish to distress any of those I love. Let a father enslaved to his own word and jealous of a vain title dispose of my hand as promised; may love alone dispose of my heart; let my tears not cease to flow in the bosom of a tender friend.[15] Let me be corrupt and wretched; but let all those I love be happy and content if that can be.[16] May the three of you constitute my sole existence, and may your happiness let me forget my misery and despair.

LETTER XVI

Reply

We are coming back to life, my Julie; every true sentiment in our souls is resuming its course. Nature has preserved our being, and love is restoring us to life. Did you have any doubt? Dared you ever once believe you could take your heart from me? You see, I know better than you that heart Heaven made for mine. I feel them joined by a common existence they can lose only in death. Is it in our power to separate them, or even to will it thus? Do they hold to each other by bonds men have fashioned and which men can break? No, no, Julie, if cruel fate denies us the sweet name of spouses, nothing can take from us that of faithful lovers; it will be the consolation of our mournful days, and we will bear it to the grave.

Thus we begin living again so as to begin suffering again, and the sentiment of our existence is for us but a sentiment of pain. Unhappy we! What has become of us? How have we ceased to be what we once were? Where is that magic of happiness supreme? Where are those exquisite raptures whose virtues quickened our flames? Nothing remains of us but our love; love alone remains, and its charms have vanished. Daughter too submissive, mistress wanting courage: all our woes are the result of your errors. Alas, a heart less pure would have led you less astray! Indeed, it is your heart's honesty that ruins us; the straightforward sentiments that fill it have banished wisdom. You meant to reconcile filial tenderness with indomitable love; by giving yourself up at once to your every inclination, you confound them instead of harmonizing them and become criminal by excess of virtue. O Julie, how inconceivable is your empire! By what strange power you enthrall my reason! Even while you make me feel ashamed of our flame, you still make me respect you through your faults; you oblige me to admire you while sharing in your remorse... Remorse!.... was it for you to feel remorse?.... you whom I loved.... you whom I cannot cease loving.... could crime come near your heart.... Cruel woman! when you restore to me that heart that is mine, restore it as it was when it was given before.

What have you told me?.... what dare you give me to understand?.... you, pass into another's arms?.... another possess you?.... No longer be mine?.... or, consummate horror, no longer be solely mine! I? I, bear that awful torture?.... I, see you outlive yourself?.... No. I would rather lose you than share you.... Would that Heaven gave me a courage equal to the transports that toss me!.... before your hand could defile itself by that fatal bond abhorred by love and reproved by honor, I would come and plunge with mine a dagger in your breast: I would drain your chaste heart of blood as yet unsullied by infidelity: with that pure blood I would mix that which burns in my veins with a flame nothing can put out; I would fall into your arms; I would breathe my last sigh on your lips.... I would receive yours....[17] Julie expiring!.... such sweet eyes extinguished by the horrors of death!.... that breast, that throne of love, rent by my hand, gushing forth blood and life.... No, live and suffer, bear the penalty of my cowardice. No, I wish you could cease to exist; but I am unable to love you enough to stab you.

O if you knew the situation of this heart strained with distress! Never did it burn with so sacred a flame. Never did it hold your innocence and virtue more dear. I am a lover, I know the art of love, that I can feel: but I am only a man, and it is beyond human strength to surrender supreme felicity. One night, one single night forever changed my soul.[18] Take from me this dangerous memory, and I am virtuous. But that fateful night reigns in the depths of my heart and will cast its shadow over the rest of my life. Ah Julie whom I worship! If we must be forever miserable, yet another hour of happiness, and endless regrets!

Listen to him who loves you. Why should we alone wish to be better than all the rest of mankind, and subscribe with childlike simplicity to illusory virtues that everyone talks about and no one practices? What! Will we be better moralists than those crowds of Learned men who people London and Paris, who all deride conjugal fidelity, and consider adultery a sport. Examples of this are not scandalous; they cannot even be criticized, and all the honorable people here would chuckle at the man who out of respect of marriage resisted his heart's penchant. Indeed, they say, is not a wrong that exists only in opinion moot when it is secret? What harm is done a husband by an infidelity he knows nothing of? By what fawning does a wife not redeem her faults?*[19] What sweetness does she not use to anticipate or remedy his suspicions? Deprived of an imaginary commod-

* And where has the good Swiss observed this? Wives who have affairs have long since taken on a loftier tone. First of all they proudly set up their lovers in the household, and if they deign to tolerate the husband, it is only insofar as he behaves toward them with the respect he owes them. A woman who attempted to conceal illicit dealings would give the impression she is ashamed and be dishonored; not a single honest woman would want her company.

ity, he actually lives happier, and this so-called crime people make such a fuss about is but one more bond within society.[20]

God forbid, O dear friend of my heart, that I should comfort yours with these shameful maxims. I loathe them without knowing how to counter them, and my conscience answers them better than my reason. Not that I wish to boast about a courage I despise, nor want any part of a virtue so costly; but I feel less guilty when reproaching my faults than when I attempt to justify them, and I consider as the consummate crime the desire to take away its remorse.

I know not what I write; my soul feels in a frightful state, worse even than the one I was in before I received your letter. The hope you restore to me is a sad and somber one; it puts out that purest glow that so often lighted our way; because of it your beauties are tarnished and become only the more touching for it; I see you tender and unhappy; my heart is bathed in the tears that flow from your eyes, and I bitterly reproach myself for a happiness I can taste only at the cost of yours.

Yet I feel that a secret ardor still impels me and gives me the courage that remorse would take away. Dear friend, ah do you know how many losses a love like mine can compensate you for? Do you know to what extent a lover who breathes only for you can make you love life? Do you realize that it is for you alone that I want to live, act, think, feel from now on? No, delightful source of my being, I shall henceforth have no other soul but your own, I shall no longer be anything more than a part of yourself, and you will find such a sweet existence in the depths of my heart that you will be unaware what charms your own has lost. Well then, we shall be criminal, but we shall not be wicked; we shall be criminal, but we shall still love virtue: far from presuming to excuse our faults, we shall lament them; we shall weep for them together; we shall redeem them if it can be done, by being generous and good. Julie! O Julie! what would you do, what can you do? You cannot flee my heart: has it not wedded yours?

These vain, ambitious schemes that have so crassly deluded me are long since forgotten. I am going to attend solely to the cares I owe to Milord Edward; he means to take me along to England; he contends I can be of use to him there. Well then, I shall follow him. But I shall steal away once a year; I shall secretly repair to your vicinity. If I cannot speak with you, at least I will have seen you; I will at least have kissed your footsteps; one look from you will have given me ten months' life. Forced to leave again, as I travel farther and farther from my beloved, I shall console myself by counting the steps that are to lead me back to her. These frequent journeys will keep your poor lover occupied; he will imagine he already feasts his eyes on you as he sets out to go see you; the memory of his transports will

enchant him on the journey back; despite cruel fate, his sad years will not be utterly wasted; there will be not one that is not marked by pleasures, and the brief moments spent in your company will be multiplied over his entire lifetime.

LETTER XVII

From Madame d'Orbe

Your lover is no more, but I have recovered my friend, and you have acquired one whose heart can return to you much more than you have lost. Julie is married, and worthy of bringing happiness to the honorable man who has just united his destiny with hers. After so many reckless acts, give thanks to the Heaven that has rescued you both, her from ignominy, and you from the regret of dishonoring her. Respect her new status; do not write to her, she begs you not to. Wait until she writes to you, as she shortly will. Now is the time I will find out whether you deserve the esteem I once had for you, and whether your heart is sensible to a friendship that is pure and disinterested.

LETTER XVIII

From Julie

You[21] have so long been the trustee of all my heart's secrets that there is no way it could now forsake such a lovely habit. On the most important occasion in my life it desires to pour itself out to you. Open yours to it, my gentle friend; take friendship's lengthy discourse into your breast; although friendship may sometimes make the speaking friend prolix, it always makes the listening friend patient.

Tied to a husband's destiny, or rather to a father's intentions by an indissoluble bond, I enter upon a new career which is to end only with death. As I set forth, let us for a moment have a look at the one I am relinquishing; for us it will not be painful to recall so dear a time. Perhaps I will find in it lessons for making good use of the time I still have left; perhaps you will find in it illumination to explain what you always perceived as obscure in my conduct. At least by examining what we once were to each other, our hearts will appreciate all the better what they owe each other until the end of our days.

It was about six years ago that I saw you for the first time.[22] You were

young, well built, appealing; other young men have looked to me handsomer and better built than you; none has given me the slightest emotion, and my heart was yours from first sight.*[23] I thought I saw in your face the features of the soul mine required. It seemed to me that my senses were serving merely as the organ of sentiments more noble; and I loved in you, less what I saw there than what I thought I felt in myself. As recently as two months ago I still believed I had not been mistaken; blind love, I said to myself, was right; we were made for each other; I would be his if man's order had not perturbed nature's affinities, and if anyone were allowed to be happy, we should have been so together.

My sentiments were common to us both; they would have deceived me had I alone felt them. The love I have known can arise only from a mutual suitability and a harmony of souls. One does not love without being loved; at least one does not love for long. Those unrequited passions which, it is said, make so many victims are based on the senses only, if some of them reach as far as the soul it is because of false affinities which soon appear for what they are. Sensual love cannot do without possession, and with it dies out. Genuine love cannot do without the heart, and lasts as long as the affinities that have given rise to it.** Such was ours in the beginning; such it will be, I hope, until the end of our days, once we have put it in better order. I saw, I felt that I was loved and ought to be. The lips were silent; the glance was controlled: but the heart made itself heard; we soon felt between us that ineffable something that renders silence eloquent, makes lowered eyes speak, confers a bold timidity, manifests desire through fear, and says all it dares not express.

I felt my heart and esteemed myself lost at your first word. I saw the embarrassment in your reserve; I approved of that respect, and loved you the more for it; I sought to compensate you for a painful and necessary silence, without any cost to my innocence; I forced my natural disposition, I imitated my Cousin; I became jocular and frolicsome like her, in order to avoid too serious explanations and pass off a thousand tender caresses under the guise of that feigned playfulness. I wanted to make your present state so pleasant that fear of a change would make you even more guarded. All of that worked out poorly for me; one does not with impunity stray from one's natural disposition. Like the madwoman I was, I hastened my ruin instead of preventing it, I used poison as a palliative, and what should

* Mr. Richardson makes great fun of these attachments born of first sight and based on undefinable correspondences. It is all very well to mock them; but as there are nonetheless only too many of this sort, instead of playing at denying them, would it not be better to teach us to triumph over them?

** When these affinities are born of fancy, love lasts as long as the illusion that makes us imagine them.

have made you hold your peace was precisely what made you speak out. In vain did I affect coldness to keep you at distance when we were alone together; that constraint itself betrayed me: you wrote. Instead of throwing your first letter into the fire, or taking it to my mother, I made so bold as to open it. Therein lay my crime, and all the rest was inevitable. I meant to refrain from answering these fatal letters which I could not refrain from reading. That frightful struggle impaired my health. I saw the chasm into which I was about to plunge. I was horrified with myself, and could not bring myself to let you leave. I fell into a sort of despair; I would have preferred you cease to exist rather than not be mine: I even reached the point of wishing for your death, to the point of requesting it of you.[24] Heaven has seen my heart; that effort must redeem a few faults.

Seeing you on the verge of obeying me, I had to speak up. I had received lessons from Chaillot that made me all the more aware of the dangers of that admission. The love that wrested it from me taught me to elude its effect. You were my last refuge; I had confidence enough in you to arm you against my weakness, I believed you worthy of saving me from myself and I was right about you. When I saw that you respected such a precious trust, I understood that my passion was not blinding me as to the virtues it made me find in you. I surrendered to it with all the more assurance that it seemed to me our hearts were sufficient to each other. Sure that I would find within mine nothing but honest sentiments, I tasted without precaution the joys of a sweet intimacy. Alas! I did not see that the disease was becoming chronic through my negligence, and that frequentation was more dangerous than love. Touched by your restraint, I thought I could without risk lessen mine; in the innocence of my desires I believed I was encouraging virtue itself in you, through the tender caresses of friendship. I learned in the bower at Clarens that I had been too sure of myself, and that one must concede nothing to the senses if one hopes to deny them anything.[25] An instant, a single instant ignited mine with a flame nothing could put out, and if my will still held firm, from that moment my heart was corrupted.

You shared my distraction; your letter made me shudder.[26] The peril was twofold: to protect me from you and from me, you had to be sent away. That was the last effort of a dying virtue; by fleeing you consummated your victory; and as soon as I no longer saw you, my languor drained me of what little strength I had left to resist you.

Upon leaving the service my father had brought Monsieur de Wolmar home with him; the fact that he owed him his life as well as a twenty years' relationship made this friend so dear to him that he could not part with him. Monsieur de Wolmar was advancing in years and although rich and of high

birth, he found no wife to suit him. My father had spoken to him of his daughter like a man who wished to make a son-in-law of his friend; the idea of seeing her was broached, and it was with this purpose that they made the trip together. It was my fate to please Monsieur de Wolmar who had never loved anyone. They secretly gave each other their word, and Monsieur de Wolmar having much business to attend to in a Northern court[27] where his family and fortune resided, he requested time for that, and left with this mutual commitment. After his departure, my father declared to my mother and me that he had destined him to be my husband, and ordered me in a voice that allowed my timidity no reply to prepare myself to receive his hand. My mother, who had only too well perceived my heart's penchant, and felt a natural inclination for you, tried several times to shake this resolution; without daring to propose you, she spoke in such a way as to give my father some consideration for you and the desire to know you; but the quality you lacked[28] made him insensible to all those you possessed, and although he conceded that birth could not substitute for them, he pretended that it alone could set them off to advantage.

The impossibility of finding happiness stirred flames it should have extinguished. A flattering illusion had sustained me in my sufferings; with it I lost the strength to bear them. As long as some hope had remained for me to become yours, I would perhaps have mastered my desires; I would have found it less difficult to resist you my whole life long than to renounce you forever, and the very thought of an endless struggle snatched away my courage to overcome.

Sorrow and love were consuming my heart; I fell into a dejection that affected my letters. The one you wrote to me from Meillerie was the last straw; my own sufferings were compounded with the sentiment of your despair. Alas! it is always the weaker soul that bears the pains of both. The proposition you were bold enough to put to me made me more indecisive than ever. My days' misfortune was assured, the unavoidable choice still before me was to add to it my parents' or yours. I was unable to bear this horrible alternative; nature's strength has a limit; such turmoil exhausted mine. I wished to be delivered from life. Heaven seemed to take pity on me; but cruel death spared me the better to undo me. I saw you, I was cured, and I was lost.[29]

If I found no happiness in my faults, I also never had expected to. I felt my heart was made for virtue and could not be happy without it; I yielded out of weakness and not error; I had not even the excuse of blindness. I had no hope left; all I could be at this point was unfortunate. Innocence and love were equally necessary to me, being unable to preserve them to-

gether and seeing your distraction, I took only you into account in my choice and ruined myself to save you.

But it is not as easy as people think to renounce virtue. It long persecutes those who relinquish it, and its charms, which are the delight of pure souls, are the first punishment of the wicked, who still love them and can no longer enjoy them. Criminal and not depraved, I could not escape the remorse in store for me; I cherished honesty, even after losing it; my shame was no less bitter to me for being secret, and had all of creation witnessed it I would not have felt it more. I took comfort in my suffering like a wounded man who fears gangrene, and in whom the sentiment of his pain sustains the hope of recovery.[30]

At the same time this state of infamy was hateful to me. By having to attempt choking off remorse without renouncing the crime, I experienced what every honest soul experiences that is distracted and is content in its distraction. A fresh illusion sweetened the bitterness of repentance: I hoped to derive from my fault a means of repairing it, and dared devise the plan to force my Father to unite us. Our love's first fruit was to confirm this tender bond. I begged it of Heaven as token of my return to virtue and of our common happiness; I desired it as another in my stead would have feared it; the spell of tender love, tempering the murmur of conscience, consoled me for my weakness through the result I was expecting from it, and made of such a cherished expectation the charm and hope of my life.

As soon as I was to bear clear indications of my condition, I had resolved to make a public declaration of it to Monsieur Perret* in the presence of my whole family.[31] I am timid it is true; I could feel how hard it would be for me, but honor itself sparked my courage, and I preferred to endure once the mortification I had deserved, rather than to nurture an everlasting shame within my heart. I knew my father would give me death or my lover; to me this alternative was not at all frightening, and, one way or the other, I anticipated that this step would put an end to all my woes.

Such, my good friend, was the secret that I tried to hide from you and you were attempting to discover with such curious anxiety. A thousand reasons obliged me to be so guarded with a man as extreme as you, besides the fact it was essential not to arm your indiscreet insistence with another pretext. It was especially apposite to remove you from so perilous a scene, and I knew well that you would never have agreed to abandon me in such a danger if you had known about it.

* The local pastor.

Alas, I was again deluded by such a flattering anticipation! Heaven rejected plans conceived in crime[32]; I did not deserve the honor of becoming a mother; my expectation still remained vain, and I was denied the possibility of expiating my fault at the expense of my reputation. In the despair where this left me, the reckless tryst that placed your life in danger was a foolhardy act which my mad love veiled from me with such a sweet excuse: I blamed myself for the ill success of my wishes, and my heart deluded by its own desires could see in the eagerness to satisfy them, only the care taken to make them legitimate some day.

For an instant I thought they had been realized; this error was the sharpest of my regrets, and love fulfilled by nature was only the more cruelly betrayed by destiny. You have learned* of the accident that destroyed, along with the seed I bore in my womb, my hopes' last foundation. This misfortune occurred exactly at the time of our separation; as if Heaven had wanted to crush me then under all the woes I had deserved, and cut at once all the ties that could unite us.

Your departure put an end to my errors as well as my pleasures; I recognized, but too late, the illusions that had deceived me. I beheld myself fully as despicable as I had become, and as unhappy as I was always to be having a love without innocence and desires without hope, which it was impossible for me to stifle. Tormented by a thousand vain regrets I gave up reflections as painful as they were futile; I was not worth bothering myself with, I dedicated my life to thinking of you. I had no honor left but yours, no hope but in your happiness, and the sentiments I received from you were the only ones by which I thought I still could be moved.

Love did not blind me to your shortcomings but it made them dear to me, and such was its illusion that I would have loved you less if you had been more perfect. I knew your heart, your impetuosity; I knew that while possessing more courage than I you had less patience, and that the woes that overwhelmed my soul brought despair to yours. It is for this reason that I always carefully hid from you my father's commitments, and at our separation, wanting to take advantage of Milord Edward's zeal for your fortune, and inspire an equal one in you, I flattered you with a hope I did not possess. Further still, knowing the danger that threatened us, I took the only precaution that could shield us from it, and engaging my freedom with my word to you insofar as was possible, I tried to inspire confidence in you, firmness in me, with a promise I would not dare break and that could placate you.[33] It was a puerile obligation, I admit, and yet I would never have deviated from it. Virtue is so necessary to our hearts, that once genuine virtue has been abandoned, we invent ourselves another after our

* This supposes other letters we do not possess.

own fashion, and cling to it all the firmer, perhaps because it is of our own choosing.

I shall not tell you what turmoil I fell prey to once you had gone. The worst of all was the fear of being forgotten. Your place of residence made me tremble; your manner of living there increased my anxiety: I thought I already could see you vilified to the point of being nothing better than a rake. That ignominy hurt me more than all my woes; I would rather have known you were unhappy than despicable; after so many pains I was accustomed to, your dishonor was the only one I could not bear.

I received reassurance with respect to fears that the tone of your letters was beginning to confirm; and it came by means that could have exacerbated the alarms of another woman than myself. I am referring to the disorder you allowed yourself to be drawn into, the prompt and free confession of which was of all proofs of your candor the one that affected me most. I knew you too well to be unaware of what such a confession must have cost you, even if I had ceased to be dear to you; I saw that only love overcoming shame could have wrested it from you. I concluded that a heart so sincere was incapable of disguising an infidelity; I found less offense in your fault than merit in owning it, and when I recalled your earlier commitments, I cured myself forever of jealousy.

My friend, I was not the happier for it; for one less torment, a thousand others endlessly arose, and I never better understood how mad it is to seek in the distraction of one's heart a peace one can find only in proper conduct. For a long time I had secretly been weeping for my most excellent mother who was insensibly being consumed by a mortal languor. Babi, in whom I had been obliged to confide by the fatal result of my fall, betrayed me and revealed to her our embraces and my faults. I had scarcely retrieved my letters from my Cousin's house, when they were discovered. The evidence was overwhelming; sorrow drained every bit of strength my mother's illness had left her. I almost expired of remorse at her feet. Far from exposing me to the death I deserved,[34] she veiled my shame, and was content to grieve for it: even you, who had so cruelly deceived her, she was unable to hate. I witnessed to the effect your letter had on her tender and compassionate heart. Alas! She desired your happiness and mine. She attempted more than once.... what purpose is served by recalling a hope forever dead? Heaven had decided otherwise. She ended her sad days in the sorrow of being unable to bend a stern husband, and leaving a daughter so unworthy of her.

Crushed by such a cruel loss, my soul had only enough strength left to feel it; the voice of groaning nature stifled the murmurs of love. I took a sort of horror for the cause of so many evils; I finally wanted to stifle the

hateful passion that had brought them upon me and renounce you forever. That was doubtless what I should do; had I not enough to weep over for the rest of my days, without endlessly seeking out new subjects for tears? Everything seemed to favor my resolution. Although sorrow melts the soul, a deep affliction hardens it. The memory of my dying mother overshadowed yours; we were far apart; hope had forsaken me; never was my incomparable friend so sublime nor so worthy to occupy my whole heart alone. Her virtue, her reason, her friendship, her tender caresses seemed to have purified it; I believed you were forgotten, I believed I was cured. It was too late: what I had taken for the coldness of spent love was but the dejection of despair.

Just as a sick man who ceases to suffer when he passes out awakens to more acute pain, I soon felt all mine revive once my father had notified me of Monsieur de Wolmar's impending return. It was then that invincible love restored to me the strength I thought I no longer possessed. For the first time in my life I dared to defy my father face to face. I flatly protested that Monsieur de Wolmar would never be anything to me; that I was determined to die a maiden; that he was master of my life,[35] but not of my heart, and that nothing would make me change my will. I shall not tell you either of his anger, nor of the treatment I had to suffer. I was unshakable: my timidity once overcome had carried me to the other extreme, and although my voice was less imperious than my father's, it was fully as determined.

He saw that my mind was made up, and that he would obtain nothing from me by authority. For a moment I thought I was delivered from his persecutions. But what became of me when I suddenly beheld at my feet the sternest of fathers moved and melting into tears? Without letting me rise he grasped my knees, and fixing his damp eyes on mine, he told me in a touching voice I can still hear within me: My daughter! Respect your unhappy father's white hair; do not send him in grief to the grave, like her who bore you in her womb. Ah! Do you want to inflict death on the entire family?[36]

Imagine my shock. That posture, that tone of voice, that gesture, those words, that terrible thought so unsettled me that I slid half-dead into his arms, and it was only after many sobs that were choking me, that I was able to answer him in a broken and faint voice: O my father! I had defenses against your threats, I have none against your tears. It is you who will be the death of your daughter.

We were both so shaken that it took us a long time to compose ourselves. Yet in reviewing to myself his last words, I surmised that he was better informed than I had thought, and, resolved to avail myself against

6. Paternal force.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

him of things he knew anyway, I was preparing myself at the risk of my life to make to him a confession put off too long, when cutting me short, as if he had foreseen and feared what I was about to tell him, he spoke to me thus:

"I know what fantasy unworthy of a wellborn daughter you are entertaining in the depths of your heart. It is time to sacrifice to duty and honesty a shameful passion that dishonors you and that you will never fulfill save at the cost of my life. Listen for once to what a Father's honor and your own demand of you, and be your own judge.

"Monsieur de Wolmar is a man of lofty birth, distinguished by all the qualities that can sustain it; who enjoys public consideration and deserves it. I owe him my life; you know the commitments I have made with him. What remains for you to learn is that, having gone to his country to put his affairs in order, he found himself caught up in the latest revolution, lost his properties there, only escaped exile in Siberia through a singular happenstance,[37] and returns here with the sorry remnants of his fortune, upon the word of his friend who never failed to keep his word to anyone. Prescribe for me now the kind of reception we must have for him upon his return. Shall I say to him: Monsieur, I promised my daughter to you while you were rich, but now that you have nothing left I retract my promise, and my daughter wants no part of you? If that is not the way I formulate my refusal, that is the way it will be interpreted: your alleged love will be taken as a pretext, or will be for me just one more affront, and we will pass, you for a maiden undone, and I for a dishonest man who sacrifices his duty and his troth to his own vile interests,[38] and compounds disloyalty with ingratitude. My daughter! it is too late to finish an unblemished life in disgrace, and sixty years of honor are not abandoned in a quarter of an hour.

"So you see," he continued, "how much everything you can say to me is now beside the point. Decide for yourself whether a preference that modesty disavows and some passing, youthful flame can ever be placed in the balance against a daughter's duty and a father's compromised honor. If the only thing at stake were for one of us to immolate his own happiness to the other, my tenderness would vie with you for so sweet a sacrifice; but my child, honor has spoken and in the blood you come from, that is always what decides."

I was not wanting for a good reply to this speech; but my father's prejudices give him principles so different from mine, that reasons which to me seemed categorical would not even have shaken him. Moreover, without knowing either how he came by the knowledge he seemed to have acquired about my conduct, nor how extensive it was; fearing because of the point he had made of interrupting me that he had already made up his mind about what I had to tell him, and, more than all that, held back by a shame I have never been able to overcome, I preferred to invoke an excuse that seemed to me more dependable, because it was more in keeping with his manner of thinking. I declared to him frankly the commitment I had made with you; I protested that I would never betray my word to you, and that, come what may, I would never marry without your consent.

Indeed, I perceived with joy that my scruple did not displease him; he sharply reproached me my promise, but he made no objection to it; such a

high opinion does a Gentleman imbued with honor naturally have for the faith of commitments, and such does he consider a pledge as something forever sacred! And so, instead of wasting time arguing over the nullity of that promise, which I would never have conceded, he obliged me to write a note with which he enclosed a letter that he instantly dispatched. In what turmoil did I not await your reply! How many times I wished that you would prove less principled than could be expected of you! But I understood you too well to doubt your obedience, and I knew that the more painful the sacrifice demanded of you, the more quickly you would assume it.[39] The reply came; it was kept from me while I was ill; after my recovery my fears were confirmed and I had no more excuses. At least my father declared to me that he would entertain none, and with the sway he had acquired over my will by the terrible word he had used with me, he made me swear that I would say nothing to Monsieur de Wolmar that could dissuade him from marrying me: for, he added, that would look to him like a scheme we had concerted, and at whatever cost, you must go through with this marriage or I must die of grief.

You know very well, my friend, that my health, so robust against fatigue and exposure to the elements, cannot hold out against the inclemency[40] of the passions, and the source of all my soul's and body's ills is to be found in my too sensible heart. Whether because prolonged worries had corrupted my blood; or because nature had chosen that time to purify it of some deadly leavening, I felt most indisposed at the end of this conversation. Upon leaving my father's chamber, I made an attempt to write a word to you,[41] and was taken so ill that I went to bed hoping never to arise again. All the rest you know too well; my imprudence precipitated yours. You came, I saw you,[42] and I thought I had simply had one of those dreams that so often made you appear before me during my delirium. But when I learned that you had come, that I actually had seen you, and that intending to share the disease of which you could not cure me, you had caught it deliberately; I could not bear this last trial, and seeing such a tender love survive hope, mine which I had taken such care to contain had nothing more to restrain it, and quickly revived more ardent than ever. I saw I was doomed to love in spite of myself; I could tell I was doomed to be criminal; that I would be able to hold out neither against my father nor against my lover, and that I would never reconcile the rights of love and blood except at the expense of my honor. Thus all my good sentiments utterly died out; all my faculties were perverted; crime lost its horror to my eyes; I felt entirely different inside; finally, the unleashed transports of a passion made furious by obstacles cast me into the most awful despair that can overwhelm a soul; I dared to despair of virtue. Your letter more prone to revive

remorse than prevent it, consummated my distraction. My heart was so corrupt that my reason could not resist the arguments of your philosophers. Horrors the thought of which had never sullied my mind dared to suggest themselves. The will still fought them, but the imagination got used to seeing them, and although I did not harbor crime beforehand in my heart, I no longer harbored those generous resolutions that alone can resist it.

I can scarce continue. Let us pause for a moment. Remember those happy and innocent times when the powerful and gentle flame that burned in us purified all our sentiments, when its holy ardor* made us cherish modesty and love honesty even more, when desires themselves seemed to arise solely to afford us the honor of overcoming them and thus being worthier of each other. Reread our first letters; recall to mind those fleeting and scarcely savored moments when love to our eyes was decked in all the charms of virtue, and when we loved each other too much to form ties between us that virtue would disavow.

What were we then, and what have we become? Two tender lovers spent an entire year together in the strictest silence, they dared not vent their sighs; but their hearts understood each other; they thought they were suffering, and they were happy. Because they understood each other, they eventually broke their silence; but satisfied to know they could triumph over themselves and offer each other honorable testimony to that effect, they spent another year in a reserve no less severe; they told each other their sufferings, and they were happy. These long struggles were ill sustained; a moment's weakness led them astray; they lost themselves in pleasures; but if they ceased to be chaste, at least they were faithful; at least Heaven and nature sanctioned the bonds they had formed; at least they still held virtue dear; they still loved it and knew how to honor it; they had less corrupted than abased themselves. Less worthy of being happy, yet they still were.

What are those tender lovers doing now, who burned with a flame so pure, who so appreciated the price of honesty? Who will hear it without lamenting for them? They are given over to crime. Even the thought of defiling the marriage bed no longer fills them with horror.... they contemplate acts of adultery![43] Could these be the same persons? Have their souls not changed? How can that ravishing image that the wicked never glimpsed ever fade from hearts in which it has shone? How can the appeal of virtue in those who have once known it fail to disgust them forever with vice? How many centuries can it have taken to produce this strange trans-

* Holy ardor! Julie, ah Julie! what a word for a woman as completely cured as you think yourself!

formation? What length of time did it take to destroy such an enchanting memory, and efface the true sentiment of happiness in people who were once able to savor it? Ah, if the first disorder is painful and slow, how quick and easy are all others! Mirage of the passions! thus dost thou bewitch reason, waylay honesty and change nature before we perceive it. One strays for a single moment in life, deviates by a single step from the straight path. At once an ineluctable slope drags him down to his ruin. He finally falls into the chasm, and awakens horrified to find himself covered with crimes, having a heart born for virtue.[44] My good friend, let us lower this veil. Need we see the awful precipice it hides from us in order to avoid coming too close to the edge? I return to my narrative.

Monsieur de Wolmar arrived and was not discouraged by the change in my face. My father left me no time to breathe. My mother's mourning was coming to an end,[45] and my grief was proof against time. I could invoke neither of them to elude my promise: I had to fulfill it. The day that was forever to take me from you and from myself seemed to me like the last of my life. I would have watched the preparations of my sepulchre with less apprehension than those of my wedding. The nearer I came to the fatal moment, the less I could uproot my first affections from my heart; they were stirred up by my attempts to quell them. Finally, I wearied of struggling in vain. At the very moment when I was ready to swear everlasting fidelity to another, my heart still swore an everlasting love to you, and I was led to the Temple[46] as an impure victim, who defiles the sacrifice where it is to be immolated.

When I reached the Church, I felt as I entered a sort of emotion I had never before experienced. I know not what terror seized hold of my soul in that simple and august place, filled through with the majesty of the one who is served therein. A sudden dread made me shiver; trembling and almost falling into a swoon, I could hardly drag myself to the foot of the pulpit. Far from regaining composure I could feel my turmoil increasing during the ceremony, and insofar as it allowed me to make out objects, it was only to be terrified by them. The dim light in the building, the profound silence of the Spectators, their modest and meditative demeanor, the procession of all my relatives, the imposing sight of my revered father, all these things lent to what was about to take place an atmosphere of solemnity that summoned me to attention and respect, and would have made me shudder at the very thought of perjury. I thought I saw the instrument of providence and heard the voice of God in the minister's grave recitation of the holy liturgy. The purity, the dignity, the holiness of marriage, so vividly set forth in the words of Scripture, those chaste and sublime duties so important to happiness, to order, to peace, to the survival of

mankind, so sweet to fulfill for their own sake; all this made such an impression on me that I seemed to experience within me a sudden revolution.[47] It was as if an unknown power repaired all at once the disorder of my affections and re-established them in accordance with the law of duty and nature.[48] The eternal eye that sees all, I said to myself, is now reading the depths of my heart; it compares my hidden will with the reply from my lips: Heaven and earth are witness to the sacred engagement into which I enter, as they will be as well to my faithfulness in observing it. What right can anyone respect among men who dares violate the foremost of them all?[49]

A fortuitous glance in the direction of Monsieur and Madame d'Orbe, whom I saw side by side with compassion in their eyes, moved me even more powerfully than had all the other objects. Amiable and virtuous couple, are you the less united for knowing less of love? Duty and honesty bind you; tender friends, faithful spouses, though you do not burn with that devouring flame that consumes the soul, you love each other with a pure and sweet sentiment that nurtures the soul, one that wisdom sanctions and reason directs; for that you are only the more dependably happy. Ah! would I could in such a bond recover the same innocence and enjoy the same happiness; if I have not merited it as you have, I shall make myself worthy of it following your example. These sentiments reawakened my hope and courage. I envisaged the holy union into which I was about to enter as a new state that was to purify my soul and restore it to all its duties. When the Pastor asked me if I promised obedience and absolute fidelity to the man I was taking as my husband, my mouth and my heart made the promise. I will keep it unto death.

Back at the house I longed for an hour of solitude and meditation. I obtained it, not without difficulty, and however eager I was to put it to use, I at first examined myself only with repugnance, fearing I had merely experienced a momentary ferment with my change of status, and would prove just as unworthy as a wife as I had been misbehaven as a maiden. The test was sure but dangerous: I began by thinking of you. I could bear myself witness that no tender memory had profaned the solemn engagement into which I had just entered. I could not conceive by what wonder your obstinate image could have left me so long in peace with so much cause for recalling it; I would have been wary of indifference and forgetfulness, as a misleading condition, which for me was too unnatural to last. That illusion was hardly to be feared: I felt that I loved you as much as and more, perhaps, than I ever had; but I felt it without blushing. I saw that in order to think of you I had no need to forget that I was another's wife. Telling myself how dear you were to me, my heart was moved, but my conscience and my senses were tranquil, and I knew from that moment that I was re-

ally changed. What a torrent of pure joy then flooded my soul! What a sentiment of peace so long forgotten revived this heart branded with ignominy, and filled my whole being with a new serenity! I seemed to feel myself being reborn; I seemed to be beginning another life. Sweet and consoling virtue, I begin it for thee; it is thou that wilst make me cherish it; it is to thee I want to dedicate it. Ah, I have learned too well what losing thee costs to abandon thee a second time!

In the bliss of a change so great, so sudden, so unhoped-for, I ventured to think back on the state I was in the day before; I shuddered at the shameless abasement my lapse of honor had reduced me to, and at all the dangers I had incurred since my first transgression. What felicitous revolution had just let me see the horror of the crime that had tempted me, and rekindled in me the taste for propriety? What rare good fortune had made me more faithful to love than to the honor I so cherished? By what good fortune had your inconstancy or mine not made me a prey to new inclinations? How could I have opposed to another lover[50] a resistance over which the first had already triumphed, and a sense of guilt accustomed to yielding to desires? Would I have better respected the rights of a spent love than I had those of virtue, when they still enjoyed their full sway? What assurance had I had of loving you alone in the world, except for an inner sentiment all lovers think they have, when they pledge everlasting constancy to each other, and blithely perjure themselves every time it pleases Heaven to change their heart?[51] Each defeat would thus have prepared the next; the habit of vice would have muted its horror in my eyes. Carried along from dishonor to infamy without finding anything to hold onto to stop myself; from betrayed lover I turn into a wanton woman, the disgrace of my sex, and the despair of my family. Who protected me from so natural an effect of my first fault? Who held me back after the first step? Who preserved my reputation and the esteem of those I cherish? Who placed me under the safeguard of a virtuous, wise husband, endearing for his character, and even for his person, and full of such undeserved respect and attachment for me? Who, finally, allows me to aspire still to the name of honest woman and gives me the courage to become worthy of it? I can see, I can feel, that the helping hand that has guided me through the shadows is the same one that lifts the veil of error from my eyes and restores me to myself in spite of me. The secret voice that had never ceased to murmur in the depths of my heart arose and thundered with greater force at the moment I was about to perish. The author of all truth did not suffer me to leave his presence guilty of a base perjury, and preventing my crime through my remorse he has shown me the abyss into which I was about to hurtle. Eternal Providence, who makest the insect crawl and the heavens turn, thou watchest over the

least of thy works! Thou recallest me to the good thou hadst made me love; I pray thee accept from a heart thou hast cleansed the homage that thou alone makest worthy of being offered thee!

At once, acutely sensing the danger from which I was delivered and the state of honor and safety to which I felt restored, I prostrated myself on the ground, I lifted toward heaven my supplicating hands, I invoked the Being whose throne it is and who when it pleases him sustains or destroys by means of our own strength the freedom he grants us. I will, said I, the good that thou willest, and of which thou alone art the source. I will love the husband thou hast given me. I will be faithful, because that is the first duty which binds the family and all of society.[52] I will be chaste, because that is the first virtue which nurtures all the others. I will everything that belongs to the order of nature thou hast established, and to the rules of reason thou gavest me. I place my heart under thy protection and my desires in thy hand. Make all my acts conform to my constant will which is thine, and no longer allow the error of a moment to prevail over the choice of my entire life.

After this short prayer, the first I had made with true zeal, I felt myself so firm in my resolutions; they seemed to me so easy and so pleasant to follow that I clearly saw where I must henceforth seek the strength I needed to resist my own heart, and which I could not find within myself. I drew from this sole discovery a new confidence, and deplored the sad blindness that had kept if from me so long. I had never been completely wanting in religion; but perhaps it would be better to have none at all, than to have one that is only external and affected, which without touching the heart assuages the conscience; to limit oneself to formulas; and to believe punctiliously in God at certain hours so as to think no more about him at all others. Scrupulously devoted to public worship, I was unable to get from it anything for my daily life. I felt I was born good, and followed my inclinations; I was fond of reflection and trusted my reason; unable to reconcile the spirit of the gospel with that of the world, nor faith with works, I had taken a middle way that satisfied my idle wisdom: I had maxims for believing and others for acting; I forgot in one place what I had thought in the other, I was devout in Church and a philosopher at home. Alas! I was nothing anywhere; my prayers were but words, my reasonings Sophisms, and I followed as sole light the false glow of wandering lanterns[53] which guided me to my perdition.

I cannot tell you what scorn this inner principle which I had heretofore lacked has given me for those which have so ill guided me. What, I ask you, was their original cause, and on what basis were they founded? A favorable instinct inclines me toward the good, a violent passion arises; it is

rooted in that same instinct, what shall I do to destroy it? From the consideration of order I derive the beauty of virtue, and its goodness from the common utility; but what effect has all that over against my particular interest, and which really is the more important to me, my happiness at the expense of the rest of mankind, or others' happiness at the expense of mine? If the fear of shame or punishment prevents me from doing wrong for my own advantage, I have only to do wrong secretly, there is nothing virtue can reproach me with, and if I am caught in the act, it is, as in Sparta, not the crime that will be punished, but the ineptness. Finally, if nature has imprinted the character and love of the beautiful in the depths of my soul, so long as it is not disfigured I will have my rule; but how am I to be assured I shall always preserve in its purity that inner effigy which among perceptible beings has no model to which it can be compared? Do we not know that disordered affections corrupt the judgment as well as the will, and that conscience is imperceptibly perverted and altered in each century, among each people, in each individual in function of the variability and diversity of prejudices?

Worship the Eternal Being, my wise and worthy friend; with a breath of air you will destroy those phantoms of reason, which have but a vain appearance and flee like a shadow in the face of immutable truth. Nothing exists but through him who is.[54] It is he who gives a purpose to justice, a basis to virtue, a value to this short life spent pleasing him; it is he who never ceases to cry to the guilty that their secret crimes have been seen, and who causes the forgotten just man to hear: thy virtues have a witness; it is he, it is his inalterable substance that is the true model of perfections an image of which we each bear within us. However our passions may disfigure it, all its features associated with the infinite essence always reappear before reason and help it re-establish whatever portion of it has been distorted by imposture and error. These distinctions seem easy to me; it takes nothing but common sense to make them. Whatever one cannot separate from the idea of that essence is God; all the rest is the work of men. It is by observing this divine model that the soul purifies and raises itself up, learns to despise its base inclinations and surmount its vile penchants. A heart imbued with these sublime truths resists the petty passions of men; that infinite grandeur disgusts it with their pride; the enchantment of meditation plucks it from earthly desires; and even if the immense Being on which it dwells did not exist, it still would do well to dwell on it endlessly the better to be master of itself, stronger, happier, and wiser.[55]

Do you want a palpable example of the vain sophisms of a reason that relies on itself alone? Let us consider coolheadedly the arguments of your philosophers, worthy apologists of crime, which never seduced a heart that

was not already corrupted. Would you not say that by attacking directly the most sacred and most solemn of engagements, these dangerous reasoners have determined to obliterate all of human society in a single blow, which is founded only upon the faith of covenants? But just look how they disculpate a secret adultery![56] The point is, they say, that no harm results from it, not even for the husband who is in the dark. As if they could be sure he would always remain in the dark? as if it were enough, to justify perjury and infidelity, that they harm no one else? as if the harm done to those who commit it were not enough to make us abhor crime? How then! It is not wrong to break faith, to do everything possible to annul the force of the vow and the most inviolable contracts? It is not wrong to oblige oneself to become a cheat and a liar? It is not wrong to form ties that make you desire the harm and the death of another? The death of the very person one ought to love most and with whom one has vowed to live? A situation whose fruit is always a thousand more crimes is not wrong? Any good that produced so many evils would for that reason alone itself be an evil.

Would one of the two think himself innocent, because he is perhaps free from his standpoint, and breaks faith with no one? He is dreadfully mistaken. It is not solely in the interest of the Spouses, but the common cause of all men that the purity of marriage not be tainted. Whenever two spouses are united by a solemn bond, the entire human race enters into an implicit commitment to respect this sacred bond, to honor in them the conjugal union; and that is, it seems to me, a very strong argument against clandestine marriages,[57] which, manifesting no sign of that union, expose innocent hearts to burning with an adulterous passion. The public is in a sense the guarantor of a covenant signed in its presence, and it can be said that the honor of a chaste wife is under the special protection of all good people. Thus whoever dares to corrupt her sins,[58] first of all because he causes her to sin, and one always shares the crimes one causes to be committed; further he directly sins himself, because he violates the public and sacred faith of marriage without which nothing can subsist in the legitimate order of human affairs.

The crime is secret, they say, and no harm results from it for anybody. If these philosophers believe in the existence of God and the immortality of the soul, can they call secret a crime that has as its witness the one principally offended and only true Judge? The strange secret that is hidden from all eyes but those from which it is of the utmost importance to hide it! Even were they not to recognize the presence of the divinity, how dare they maintain that they harm no one? How do they prove it is indifferent to a father to have heirs who are not of his blood; to be burdened, perhaps

with more children than he would have had, and forced to distribute his property to the tokens of his dishonor without feeling for them a father's affections? If we suppose these reasoners are materialists, we are all the more entitled to cite against them the sweet voice of nature, which protests in the depths of every heart against a prideful philosophy, and was never attacked with good reasons. Indeed, if the body alone produces thought, and sentiment depends solely upon the organs, must not two Beings born of the same blood have a more intimate analogy between them, a stronger attachment for each other, and resemble each other in soul and countenance, which is a considerable reason for loving each other?[59]

It is then to do no wrong, in your opinion, to obliterate or disrupt this natural union through an alien blood, and corrupt in its principle the mutual affection that must bind all the members of a family together? Is there on earth an honorable man who would not be horrified at exchanging another's child at nurse, and is it a lesser crime to exchange it in the mother's womb?

If I consider my sex in particular, what harms do I perceive in this disorder which they pretend does no harm! Were it but the defilement of a guilty woman whom the loss of honor soon deprives of all the other virtues! So many all too certain indices to a tender husband of a connivance they think they can justify by secrecy! Were it only to be no longer loved by his wife. What will she accomplish with her wily attentions other than further to prove her indifference? Can the eye of love be deceived by feigned caresses? And what torture alongside one's beloved, to feel that the hand embraces us and the heart rejects us? I grant that fortune may favor a prudence it has so often betrayed; provisionally I count for nothing the brashness of entrusting one's so-called innocence and another's peace of mind to precautions which it pleases Heaven to confound.[60] How many falsehoods, how many lies, how many double-dealings to cover up a criminal traffic, to betray a husband, corrupt servants, deceive the public! What a scandal for accomplices! What an example for children! What becomes of their education amidst so much attention given to gratifying criminal passions with impunity? What becomes of the peace of the household and the union of its heads? How! in all this the husband is not injured? Who then will compensate him for a heart that was meant to be his? Who will restore to him a wife worthy of respect? Who will give him peace and security? Who will cure him of his just suspicions? Who will give a father confidence in the sentiment of nature when he embraces his own child?[61]

With regard to the supposed bonds that adultery and infidelity are said to form between families,[62] this is less a serious argument than an absurd and brutal joke which for sole reply deserves but scorn and indignation.

The betrayals, the quarrels, the fights, the murders, the poisonings with which this disorder has covered the earth in every era, sufficiently show what must be expected for the peace and union of men from an attachment born of crime. If some sort of society results from this vile and despicable traffic, it resembles that of thieves which must be destroyed and annihilated in order to secure legitimate societies.

I have tried to suspend the indignation these maxims provoke in me so as to discuss them calmly with you. The more insane they seem to me, the less I must disdain to refute them, to shame myself for having perhaps listened to them with too little aversion. You see how poorly they stand up to the scrutiny of sound reason; but where is sound reason to be found if not in him who is its source, and what must we think of those who make use for men's ruin of that divine torch which he gave them to guide them?[63] Let us be wary of a philosophy of words[64]; let us be wary of a false virtue that undermines all virtues, and attempts to justify all vices in order to entitle itself to have them all. The best way to discover what is good is to seek it sincerely, and one cannot thus seek it for long without going back to the author of all good. It seems to me I have been doing this since I have been busying myself correcting my sentiments and my reason; you will do it better than I once you decide to follow the same road. It comforts me to remember that you have often nurtured my mind in the great ideas of religion, and you whose heart hid nothing from me would not have spoken thus if your sentiments had been other. It seems to me that those conversations had their charms for us. The presence of the Supreme Being was never unwelcome to us; he used to make us more hopeful than terrified; he never frightened any soul but the wicked man's; we were happy to have him as witness of our conversations, to lift ourselves conjointly toward him. If we were sometimes humiliated by shame, we would say to ourselves while deploring our weaknesses: at least he sees the bottom of our hearts, and we were the more tranquil for it.

If that sense of security led us astray, it falls to the principle on which it was founded to bring us back on track. Is it not quite unworthy of a man never to be able to be at one with himself, to have one rule for his acts, another for his sentiments, to think as if he had no body, act as if he had no soul, and never to relate to his whole self anything he does his whole life long? As for me, I find that we are quite strong with our age-old maxims when we do not restrict them to vain speculations. Weakness is man's lot, and the God of mercy who created him will doubtless forgive him for it; but crime is the wicked man's lot, and will not remain unpunished before the author of all justice.[65] An unbeliever, in other respects born good, abandons himself to the virtues he loves; he does good by inclination and

not by choice. If all his desires are righteous, he follows them without being forced; he would follow them just the same if they were not; for why should he give himself the trouble? But he who recognizes and serves the common father of men believes he has a higher purpose; the desire to fulfill it inspires his zeal, and following a rule more sure than his inclinations, he is able to do the good that costs him something, and sacrifice his heart's desires to the law of duty. Such is, my friend, the heroic sacrifice to which we are both called. The love that united us would have charmed our lives. It survived hope; it defied time and separation[66]; it endured every kind of trial. So perfect a sentiment was not destined to perish of itself; it was worthy of being immolated only to virtue.

I shall tell you something more. All is changed between us; your heart must necessarily change. Julie de Wolmar is no longer your former Julie; the revolution in your sentiments for her is inevitable, and the only choice you have left is to attribute the honor of this change to vice or to virtue. I have in memory a passage from an Author you will not impugn. "Love," he says, "is deprived of its greatest charm when honesty abandons it. To appreciate its full value, the heart must delight in it and raise us up by raising up the loved one. Take away the idea of perfection and you take away enthusiasm; take away esteem and love is reduced to nothing. How will a woman honor a man she must scorn? How will he himself be able to honor her who did not shrink from abandoning herself to a vile corrupter! Thus they will soon scorn each other. Love, that heavenly sentiment, will be reduced for them to a shameful traffic. They will have lost honor and will not have found felicity."* That is our lesson, my friend, it was you who dictated it.[67] Did ever our hearts love each other more delightfully, and did they ever cherish honesty more than in those happy times when that letter was written? See then what a criminal passion would lead us to today, entertained at the cost of the sweetest transports that enrapture the soul. The horror of vice which is so natural to both of us would soon extend to the accomplice of our faults; we would hate each other for having loved each other too much, and love would die out in remorse. Is it not preferable to purify a sentiment so dear in order to make it durable? Is it not preferable to preserve at least as much of it as can be reconciled with innocence? Is that not to preserve all that was most charming in it? Yes, my good and worthy friend, in order to love each other forever we must renounce each other. Let us forget all the rest and you shall be the lover of my soul. This thought is so sweet that it consoles for everything.

Such is the faithful tableau of my life, and the candid story of all that has taken place in my heart. I love you still, have no doubt of that. The senti-

* See part one, Letter XXIV.

ment that attaches me to you is still so tender and so intense that another woman would perhaps be alarmed by it; for me, I once knew one too different to mistrust this one. I can tell it has changed in nature, and in that at least, my past faults ground my present security. I know that strict decorum and ostentatious virtue would require even more and would not be content until you were entirely forgotten. I believe I have a surer rule and abide by it. I listen to my conscience in secret; it makes me no reproach, and never does it mislead a soul that consults it sincerely.[68] If that does not suffice to justify me in the world, it suffices for my own tranquillity. How did this felicitous change come about? I do not know. What I do know, is that I have eagerly desired it. God alone has done the rest. I would think that a soul once corrupted remains so forever, and never returns to the good on its own; unless some sudden revolution, some quick change of fortune and situation changes its relations, and with a violent shock helps it get settled again. All its habits being broken and all its passions modified, in the general confusion one sometimes returns to one's native character and becomes like a new being freshly emerging from the hands of nature. Then the memory of its former baseness can serve as prophylaxis against a relapse. Yesterday one was abject and weak; today one is strong and magnanimous. By observing oneself in two such different conditions, one better appreciates the value of the condition that has been recovered, and in consequence one becomes more attentive to maintaining it. My marriage has made me experience something similar to what I am endeavoring to explain to you. This bond so dreaded delivers me from a much more dreadful bondage, and my husband is the dearer to me for having restored me to myself.

We were too united, you and I, for our union to be destroyed by changing in kind. If you are losing a tender lover, you are gaining a faithful friend, and whatever we may have said during our illusions, I doubt this change is to your disadvantage. Derive the same benefit from it that I do, I beg you, in order to become better and wiser, and purify through Christian morals the lessons of philosophy. I shall never be happy unless you too are happy, and I feel more than ever that there is no happiness without virtue. If you genuinely love me, give me the sweet consolation of seeing that our hearts are not less attuned in their return to the good than they were during their distraction.

I do not think I need apologize for this long Letter. If you were less dear to me, it would be shorter. Before ending it I still have a favor to ask of you. A cruel burden weighs on my heart. My past conduct is not known to Monsieur de Wolmar; but an unreserved sincerity is part of the fidelity I owe him. I would already a hundred times have admitted everything; you

alone have held me back. Although I know Monsieur de Wolmar's wisdom and moderation, to name you is nonetheless to compromise you, and I have not wished to do so without your assent. Would it displease you to have me ask it of you, and would I have presumed too much of you or of me in flattering myself I should obtain it? Bear in mind, I beseech you, that there is no way this reticence can be innocent, that it becomes more cruel to me each day, and that until I receive your reply, I shall not have a moment's tranquillity.

LETTER XIX

Reply

So you are no longer my Julie? Ah! say not so, worthy and respectable woman. You are more than ever. You are she who deserves the tribute of all creation. You are she whom I worshipped when I was beginning to perceive genuine beauty; you are she whom I shall not cease to worship, even after my death, if my soul retains some recollection of the truly heavenly charms that enchanted it when I lived. That feat of courage that restores you to the fullness of your virtue only makes you even more like yourself. No, no, whatever torture I experience in feeling and saying this, you were never more my Julie than at the moment you renounce me. Alas! it is by losing you that I have found you once more. But I whose heart shudders at the very suggestion of imitating you, I, tormented by a criminal passion I can neither endure nor overcome, am I the person I thought I was? was I worthy to appeal to you? What right had I to importune you with my complaints and despair? How dared I presume to sigh for you! Oh! what was I to love you?

Madman! As if I were not experiencing enough humiliations without seeking out new ones! Why count differences that love effaced? It raised me, put me on a plane with you, its flame sustained me; our hearts had fused, all their sentiments were common and mine shared in the greatness of yours. And here I am fallen back into all my baseness! Flattering hope which fed my soul and deluded me for so long, art thou then gone forever? She will not be mine? I am losing her for ever? She is bringing happiness to someone else?... O fury! O hellish torment!.... Unfaithful woman! ah! were you ever to.... Forgive me, forgive me, Madame,[69] take pity on my rantings. O God! You said it all too well, she is no more.... that tender Julie is no more to whom I could lay bare my heart's every movement. What, I imagined myself unhappy, and I had it in me to complain?.... she had it in her to listen to me? I was unhappy?.... then what am I today?.... No, I shall

not again make you blush at yourself or at me. It is ended, we must renounce each other; we must part. Virtue itself has dictated the decree; your hand managed to write it down. Let us forget each other.... forget me, in any case. I have so resolved, I swear it; I shall speak to you no more of myself.

Shall I venture to speak to you again of you, and preserve the only interest I have left in this world, that of your happiness? While setting before me the state of your soul, you have told me nothing of your fate. Ah! as reward for a sacrifice you surely appreciate, be so good as to spare me this unbearable doubt. Julie, are you happy? If you are, grant me in my despair the only consolation available to me; if you are not, for pity's sake be so good as to tell me, I shall not be unhappy so long.[70]

The more I reflect on the confession you are contemplating, the less I can assent to it, and the same cause that always made me lack courage to refuse you anything must make me inexorable in refusing this. The subject is of the utmost importance, and I exhort you to weigh my reasons well. First of all, it seems to me that your extreme scrupulousness leads you into error in this respect, and I cannot see on what basis the most austere virtue could exact such a confession. No commitment on earth can have a retroactive effect. There is no way we can engage our past or promise what we no longer have the power to keep; when we pledge ourselves to someone, why should we owe that person an account for the prior use made of our freedom and of a fidelity we have not promised? Make no mistake about it, Julie, it is not with your husband, but with your friend that you have broken faith. Before your father's tyranny, Heaven and nature had united us with each other. By engaging yourself otherwise you have committed a crime that love nor perhaps honor cannot forgive, and it is for me alone to claim the property that Monsieur de Wolmar has stolen from me.

If there are cases where duty can require such a confession, it is where the danger of a relapse obligates a prudent woman to take precautions against it.[71] But your letter has enlightened me more than you think about your true sentiments. Reading it, I felt in my own heart how much yours would have abhorred at close range, even in the lap of love, a criminal involvement the horror of which we did not perceive from a distance.

Insofar as duty and honesty do not require this divulgence, wisdom and reason prohibit it; for it is to put unnecessarily at risk that which is most precious in marriage, a spouse's attachment, mutual confidence, domestic peace. Have you sufficiently reflected on such a step? Do you know your husband well enough to be sure of the effect it will have on him? Do you know how many men there are in this world who would need no more than that in order to conceive an unbridled jealousy, an invincible scorn,

and perhaps make an attempt on a woman's life? For this delicate inquiry great attention must be paid to the times, the places, the characters. In the country where I am, such divulgences are without the slightest danger, and those who treat conjugal faith so lightly are not of a sort to make a big ado over faults that preceded the engagement. To say nothing of the circumstances that sometimes make these confessions indispensable and that were not present in your case, I know women of rather middling reputation, who with little risk have won praise for such sincerity, perhaps to obtain at that price a confidence they could abuse if the need arises. But in places where the sanctity of marriage is more respected, in places where that sacred bond makes for a solid union and husbands have a genuine attachment for their wives, they ask them for a more strict accounting of themselves; they want their hearts to have known a tender sentiment for them alone; usurping a right they do not have, they demand that their wives be theirs exclusively before belonging to them, and no more forgive the abuse of freedom than a real infidelity.[72]

Believe me, virtuous Julie, beware a fruitless and needless zeal. Keep a dangerous secret which nothing obligates you to reveal, the communication of which can undo you and is of no use to your husband. If he is worthy of this confession, his soul will be saddened by it, and you will have distressed him for no reason; if he is not worthy, why would you wish to give him a pretext for his betrayals of you? How can you know whether your virtue, which has sustained you against the assaults of your heart, would still sustain you against ever-renewed domestic miseries? Do not willingly aggravate your woes, lest they become greater than your courage, and lest excessive scruples make you fall back into a state worse than the one from which you had difficulty escaping. Wisdom is the basis of all virtue; consult it, I implore you, in the most important circumstance of your life, and if this fatal secret weighs so cruelly on you, wait at least, before you unburden yourself of it, for time, for the years to give you a more perfect acquaintance of your husband, and add in his heart, to the effect of your beauty, the still more certain effect of the charms of your character, and the agreeable habit of subjection to them. Finally, should these reasons solid as they are not persuade you, do not close your ear to the voice that is expounding them to you. O Julie, harken to a man capable of some virtue, and who at least deserves from you some sacrifice for the one he makes for you today.

I must end this Letter. I can tell I would not be able to prevent myself from resuming a tone that you must no longer hear. Julie, I must leave you! still so young, I must already renounce happiness? O time, that art never to return! time forever past, source of endless regrets! pleasures,

transports, sweet ecstasies, delightful moments, heavenly raptures! my love, my only love, honor and charm of my life! farewell forever.

LETTER XX

From Julie

You ask me whether I am happy. This question touches me, and by raising it you help me to answer it; for far from seeking to forget, as you suggest, I confess I could never be happy if you ceased to love me: but I am happy in every respect, and my happiness wants nothing but yours. If I avoided speaking of Monsieur de Wolmar in my previous letter, I did so out of consideration for you. I was too aware of your sensibility not to fear embittering your sufferings: but since your uneasiness about my fate compels me to tell you about the man on whom it depends, I can do so only in a manner worthy of him, as it behooves his spouse and a friend of truth.

Monsieur de Wolmar is nearly fifty; his steady, measured life and tranquil passions have preserved in him such a sound constitution and hearty air that he looks scarcely forty, and nothing about him betokens advancing age save experience and wisdom. His physiognomy is noble and prepossessing, his bearing simple and open, his manners are civil rather than profuse, he says little and with much sense, but without affecting either concision or sententiousness. He is the same for everyone, neither seeks out nor flees anyone, and never has other priorities than those of reason.

Despite the natural coldness of his disposition, his heart abetting my father's intentions thought it sensed that I was well-suited to him, and for the first time in his life he contracted an attachment. This moderate but durable inclination has been so well governed by decorum, and has been maintained so evenly, that he has had no need to change his tone in changing his status, and without offending conjugal gravity he has retained with me since his marriage the same manners he had before. I have never seen him either gay or sad, but always content; never does he speak to me of himself, rarely of me; he does not seek me out, but does not dislike my seeking him, and is reluctant to leave my side. He does not laugh; he is grave without disposing others to be; on the contrary, his serene bearing seems to invite me to merriment, and as the pleasures I enjoy are the only ones he seems to appreciate, one of the attentions I owe him is to try to keep myself entertained. In a word, he wants me to be happy; he does not say this, but I see it; and is desiring the happiness of one's wife not to have achieved it?

However carefully I may have observed him, I have been able to dis-

cover no passion of any kind in him except the one he has for me. Moreover this passion is so even and so temperate that one would say he loves only as much as he means to and means to only as much as reason allows. He is genuinely what Milord Edward believes himself to be, in which respect I find him quite superior to all us people of sentiment who admire ourselves so; for the heart deceives us in a thousand ways and acts only on a principle that is always suspect; but reason has no end save what is good; its rules are sure, clear, easy in the conduct of life, and never does it go astray but in futile speculations that are not right for it.

Monsieur de Wolmar's greatest predilection is for observation. He likes to make judgments on men's characters and on the actions he observes. He makes them with profound wisdom and the most perfect impartiality. If an enemy did him harm, he would discuss his motives and means as calmly as if it were a matter of complete indifference. I do not know how he has heard about you, but he has spoken to me of you several times with high regard, and I know him to be incapable of pretending. Sometimes I have thought I noticed him observing me during these conversations, but there is good reason for believing that this so-called noticing is merely the secret reproach of a conscience on alert. However that may be, I have done my duty in this matter; neither fear nor shame have led me to be unjustly reserved, and I have done you justice when speaking to him, as I do him when speaking to you.

I almost forgot to tell you about our income and its management. The remains of Monsieur de Wolmar's estate combined with that of my father, who set aside only an annuity for himself, comprise a respectable and moderate fortune for him, of which he makes noble and wise use, by affording in his house, not the inconvenient and vain display of luxury, but plenty, the true comforts of life,*[73] and the necessities of needy neighbors. The order he has brought into his house is the image of the one that prevails in his heart, and seems to imitate in a small household the order established

* There is no more common association than that of pomp and niggardliness. One skims from nature, from true pleasures, from need itself, all that is sacrificed to opinion. One man decorates his palace at the expense of his kitchen; another prefers lovely plates to a good dinner; yet another puts on a stately repast, and dies of hunger the rest of the year. When I see gilded dishes, I expect poisonous wine. How often in country houses, breathing in the cool morning air, are you drawn by the sight of a lovely garden? You arise early, go for a walk, work up an appetite, are ready for your breakfast. The Officer is out, or there are no provisions, or Madame has not given orders, or they make you tire of waiting. Sometimes they anticipate your desires, come magnificently to offer you some of everything, on condition you accept nothing. You have to keep your fast until three o'clock, or breakfast on tulips. I remember once walking in a quite lovely park whose Mistress was said to be very fond of coffee and never took any, inasmuch as it cost four sols per cup: but she willingly gave her gardener a thousand écus. I think I would rather have hedgerows less well trimmed, and drink coffee more often.

in the governance of the earth. One finds here neither that inflexible regularity that is more annoying than advantageous, and is bearable only to the one who imposes it, nor that misguided disorder that for possessing too much renders the use of anything impossible. The master's hand can always be recognized and is never felt; he has so well ordained the original arrangement of things that now it runs all by itself, and discipline and freedom are enjoyed at the same time.

That, my good friend, is an abbreviated but faithful notion of Monsieur de Wolmar's character, as far as I have come to know it since I have been living with him. As he appeared to me the first day, so he appears to me the most recent without the slightest alteration; which makes me hope I have observed him accurately, and that there is nothing more for me to discover; for I cannot imagine he could have turned out otherwise without some loss.

From this tableau you can answer yourself in advance, and you would have to greatly look down on me not to think me happy with so much cause for being so.* The thing that long deluded me and perhaps still deludes you is the idea that love is essential to a happy marriage. My friend, this is an error; honesty, virtue, certain conformities, less of status and age than of character and humor, suffice between husband and wife; that does not prevent a very tender attachment from emerging from this union which, without exactly being love, is nonetheless sweet and for that only the more lasting. Love is accompanied by a continual anxiety of jealousy or deprivation, ill suited to marriage, which is a state of delectation and peace. One does not marry in order to think solely about each other, but in order to fulfill conjointly the duties of civil life, govern the household prudently, raise one's children well. Lovers never see anyone but themselves, are endlessly occupied with each other alone, and the only thing they can do is love each other. That is not enough for Spouses who have so many other duties to attend to. There is no passion that gives us so strong an illusion as love: its violence is taken for a sign of its durability; the heart, replete with so sweet a sentiment, extends it, so to speak, into the future, and as long as that love lasts one believes it will never end. But on the contrary, its very ardor consumes it; it wears with youth, fades with beauty, burns out under the snows of age, and since the world began a pair of white-haired lovers sighing for each other has never been seen.[74] Lovers must therefore assume that sooner or later they will cease to worship each other; then the idol they served being destroyed, they see each other as they are. They search with astonishment for the one they loved; not find-

* It would appear she had not yet discovered the fatal secret that subsequently tormented her so, or else she did not at that time wish to confide it to her friend.

ing that person any more they take out their spite on the one who remains, who instead of being embellished by the imagination is now disfigured to the same degree; there are few people, says La Rochefoucauld, who are not ashamed of having loved each other, once they cease to do so.*[75] How much is it then to be feared lest tedium follow upon sentiments that were too intense, lest their decline without pausing at indifference turn directly into disgust, lest the two ultimately become utterly sated with each other, and for having loved each other too much as lovers come to hate each other as husband and wife! My dear friend, you have always seemed to me very attractive, much too much so for my innocence and peace of mind; but I have seen you only as a lover, how could I know what you would have become once you ceased being in love? Spent love would still have left you your virtue, I allow; but is that enough for happiness within a bond the heart must confirm, and how many virtuous men are nevertheless insufferable husbands? With respect to all this you can apply the same things to me.

As for Monsieur de Wolmar, no illusion prepossesses us for each other; we see each other such as we are; the sentiment that joins us is not the blind transport of passionate hearts, but the immutable and constant attachment of two honest and reasonable persons who, destined to spend the rest of their lives together, are content with their lot and try to make it pleasurable for each other. It seems that if we had been created expressly to be joined together it could not have been done more satisfactorily. If his heart were as tender as mine, it would be impossible to prevent so much sensibility on both sides from clashing occasionally, and nothing but quarrels ensuing. If I were as tranquil as he, there would be too much coldness between us, and it would make company less agreeable and pleasing. If he had not loved me, we would get along badly; if he had loved me too much, I would have found him importunate. Each of us is precisely what the other requires; he enlightens me and I enliven him; we are enhanced by being together, and it seems we are destined to constitute but a single soul between us, of which he is the intellect and I the will. Even his somewhat advancing age turns to our common advantage: for given the passion by which I was tormented, it is certain that, had he been younger, I would have married him even more reluctantly, and this excessive repugnance would perhaps have prevented the felicitous revolution that has taken place in me.

My friend: Heaven enlightens the good intentions of fathers, and rewards the docility of children. God forbid I should mean to make light of

* I would be most surprised if Julie had read and quoted La Rochefoucauld in any other circumstance. Never will his sorry book be admired by good people.

your distress. Solely the desire to reassure you completely about my fate leads me to add what I am about to say. Were I, with the sentiments I formerly had for you and the knowledge I now possess, still free, and mistress to choose a husband, I call as witness of my sincerity the God who is good enough to enlighten me and who reads the depths of my heart, it is not you I would choose, it is Monsieur de Wolmar.

It may matter to your complete recovery[76] that I finish telling you what is still on my heart. Monsieur de Wolmar is older than I. If as punishment for my faults, Heaven took from me the worthy spouse I have so little deserved, it is my firm intention never to take another. If he was not fortunate enough to find a chaste maiden, at least he will leave behind a chaste widow. You know me too well to believe that, having once made you this declaration, I am the kind of woman who could ever retract it.[77]

What I have said in order to end your doubts can also serve to answer in part your objections to the confession I believe I must make to my husband. He is too wise to punish me for a humiliating act that repentance alone can wrest from me, and I am not more incapable of employing the ruse of the Ladies you mention than he is of entertaining such a suspicion. As for the reason for which you contend this confession is not required, it is surely a sophism. For although a woman is bound to nothing in respect to a spouse she does not yet have, that does not authorize her to represent herself to him as other than she is. I had sensed this, even before my marriage, and if the vow extorted by my father prevented me from doing my duty in this regard, I was only the guiltier for it, since it is a crime to take an unjust vow, and yet a second to keep it. But I had another reason which my heart dared not admit to itself, and which made me much guiltier still.[78] Thank Heaven it no longer subsists.

A more legitimate and weightier consideration is the danger of needlessly troubling the peace of an honorable man who owes his happiness to the esteem in which he holds his wife. It is certain that he no longer has the power to sever the bond that unites us, nor I the power to have better deserved him. Thus by confiding indiscreetly in him I run the risk of causing him utterly needless affliction, without gaining any other advantage by my sincerity than to unburden my heart of a baneful secret that weighs cruelly upon it. I can tell I will be the more tranquil for it after declaring it to him; but he perhaps will be less so, and it would be a poor reparation indeed of my wrongs to prefer my own peace of mind to his.

What shall I do then in my present state of doubt? While waiting for Heaven better to enlighten me about my duties, I will follow the counsel of your friendship; I will remain silent; I will conceal my faults from my

husband, and try to expunge them through a conduct that might some day merit their forgiveness.

To begin so necessary a reform, kindly consent, my friend, that we cease henceforth all relationship between us. If Monsieur de Wolmar had received my confession, he would decide to what extent we may maintain the sentiments of friendship that join us and afford each other innocent tokens of it; but since I dare not consult him on that, I have too well learned at my expense how far the most apparently legitimate habits can lead us astray. It is time to become prudent. Despite the security of my heart, I no longer wish to be judge of my own cause, nor as wife succumb to the same overconfidence that was my undoing as maiden. This is the last letter you shall receive from me. I beg you also to write me no more. Yet as I shall never cease to take the tenderest interest in you and since this sentiment is as pure as the light of day, I will be most pleased to have news of you betimes, and see you achieve the happiness you deserve. You may write from time to time to Madame d'Orbe on those occasions when something interesting happens for you to tell us about. I hope the honesty of your soul will always be manifest in your letters. Moreover my Cousin is virtuous and discreet enough to communicate to me only what is fit for me to see, and suppress this correspondence if you were capable of abusing it.

Farewell, my dear and good friend; if I believed fortune could make you happy, I would say to you: pursue fortune; but perhaps you are right to disdain it, possessing treasures enough of your own. I prefer to say to you: pursue felicity, it is the wise man's fortune; we have always felt that there could be no felicity without virtue; but take care lest that word virtue, too abstract, be more glittering than solid, and an ostentatious name that serves more to dazzle others than content ourselves. I shudder when I think that people who carried adultery in the depths of their hearts dared speak of virtue! Do you quite realize what a term so respectable and so profaned meant to us, at the same time we were involved in a criminal relationship? Beneath that sacred enthusiasm the frantic love that so inflamed us both disguised its transports to make them still dearer to us and prolong our delusion. We were made, I dare believe, to follow and cherish genuine virtue, but we deceived ourselves in our pursuit of it and were following nothing but a vain phantom. It is time for the illusion to cease; it is time for those who have been too long astray to come home. My friend, for you this return will not be difficult. You bear your guide within you, you may have neglected it, but you have never rejected it. Your soul is sound, it clings to all that is good, and if it sometimes loses its grasp, that is for failing to use all its strength holding on. Search deep in your conscience, and

see if you might not find there some forgotten principle that would help better to organize all your acts, connect them more firmly, and with a common purpose. It is not enough, believe me, for virtue to be the base of your conduct, if you do not establish that base itself on an unshakable bedrock. Remember those Indians who think the world is borne by a huge elephant, and then the elephant by a tortoise, and when they are asked what bears the tortoise, they do not know what to say.[79]

I implore you to pay some attention to this friend's words, and choose a surer route to happiness than the one that so long led us astray. I shall not cease to ask Heaven to grant both you and me this pure felicity, and will not rest easy until I have obtained it for us both. Ah! If ever our hearts in spite of us recall the errors of our youth, let it be at least in such a way that the redirection they have produced justifies the remembrance, and that we may be able to say with the ancient: alas we would perish had we not perished![80]

Here end the lady preacher's sermons. From now on she will have enough on her hands with preaching to herself. Farewell, my gentle friend, farewell forever; so decrees inflexible duty. But do believe that Julie's heart cannot forget what she has cherished.... oh God! what am I doing?.... you will see too well from the condition of this paper.[81] Ah! has one not the right to wax tender when extending to one's friend a final farewell?

LETTER XXI

To Milord Edward[82]

Yes, Milord, it is true; my soul is oppressed with the weight of life. For a long time it has been a burden to me; I have lost everything that could have endeared it to me, only the sorrows remain to me. But they say I have no right to dispose of it without an order from the one who gave it me. I also know that it belongs to you in more than one way. Your ministrations have saved it twice and your kindnesses constantly preserve it. I will never dispose of it without being sure of my right to do so without crime, nor so long as the slightest hope remains of employing it for you.

You used to say I was necessary to you; why did you deceive me? Since we have been in London, far from thinking of ways to make me useful to you, all you do is look after me. What superfluous precautions you take! Milord, as you know, I hate crime even more than life; I worship the eternal Being; I owe you everything, I love you, I hold to you alone on earth; friendship, duty can chain a miserable man to earth: pretexts and sophisms

will never do so. Enlighten my reason, speak to my heart; I am ready to hear you: but remember that despair cannot easily be fooled.

You want reasoning: well then let us reason. You want the deliberation scaled to the importance of the question under discussion, I agree to that. Let us seek truth peaceably, tranquilly. Let us discuss the general proposition as if it concerned someone else. Robeck wrote an apology for willful death before he killed himself.[83] I do not mean to write a book as he did and I do not find his very satisfactory, but I hope to imitate his detachment in this discussion.

I have long meditated on this grave subject. That you must know, for you are aware of what has happened and I am still alive. The more I reflect on it, the more I find that the question comes down to this fundamental proposition: to seek what is good and flee what is ill for oneself insofar as it offends no one else is the right of nature. When our life is an ill for us and a good for no one it is therefore permissible to deliver oneself of it.[84] If there is one evident and certain maxim in the world, I think that is it, and if someone managed to overturn it, there is no human deed that could not be made into a crime.

What do our Sophists say about this? First of all they regard life as something that is not ours, because it has been given to us; but it is precisely because it has been given to us that it is ours. Did God not give them two arms? Yet when they fear gangrene they have one cut off, and both, if need be. Precisely the same holds for anyone who believes in the immortality of the soul; for if I sacrifice my arm to preserve something more precious which is my body, I sacrifice my body to preserve something more precious which is my well-being. Although all the gifts that Heaven has given us are naturally good things for us, they are only too subject to changing in nature, and to them it added reason to teach us to discern among them. If this rule did not entitle us to choose some and reject others, what use would it be among men?

They turn this insubstantial objection over in a thousand ways. They consider man living on earth as a soldier on sentry duty. God, they say, has placed you in this world, why do you quit it without his leave?[85] But how about you, whom he has placed in your own city, why do you quit it without his leave? Is leave not implicit in ill-being? Wherever he places me, whether in a body, or on earth, it is to remain there so long as I am well off, and to quit it as soon as I am badly off. Such is the voice of nature and of God. We are to await the order, I grant; but when I die naturally God does not order me to give up this life, he takes it from me: it is by making life unbearable to me that he orders me to give it up. In the first case, I hold out with all my strength, in the second I have the merit of obeying.

Can you imagine how there can be people unjust enough to stigmatize willful death as rebellion against providence, as if one meant to escape its laws? It is not to escape them that one ceases to live, but to carry them out. What! Does God have power only over my body? Is there some place in the universe where some extant being is not under his hand, and will he act less immediately on me, when my purified substance is more of a piece, and more like his own? No, his justice and goodness are my hope, and if I believed that death could remove me from his power, I would no longer wish to die.

That is one of the *Phaedo*'s Sophisms, full as it otherwise is of sublime truths. If your slave killed himself, says Socrates to Cebes, would you not punish him, if you could, for having unjustly deprived you of your property?[86] Good Socrates, what are you telling us? Does one no longer belong to God after death? That is not it at all, but you should have said: if you burden your slave with a garment that impedes him in the service he owes you, will you punish him for having cast off the garment the better to carry out his service? The great error is to attribute too much importance to life; as if our being depended on it, and after death we were nothing at all. Our life is nothing in God's eyes; it is nothing in the eyes of reason, it should be nothing in ours, and when we leave our body, we merely lay aside an inconvenient garment. Is that worth such ado? Milord, these declaimers are not in good faith. Absurd and cruel in their reasonings, they make the alleged crime worse as if one were ending one's existence, and punish it, as if one still existed.

As for the *Phaedo*, which furnished them the only imposing argument they ever invoked, this question there is treated only very lightly and as it were in passing.[87] Socrates, condemned by an unjust sentence to lose his life within a few hours, had no need to examine very closely whether he had the right to dispose of it. Even if we grant that he actually spoke the words Plato puts in his mouth, believe me, Milord, he would have pondered them more carefully at the point of putting them into practice; and the proof that no good objection to the right to dispose of one's own life can be drawn from that immortal work is that Cato read it all the way through twice, the very night he departed this world.[88]

These same Sophists ask whether life can ever be an evil? Considering the throng of errors, torments, and vices with which it is filled, one would be much more inclined to ask whether it was ever a good? Crime continually besieges the most virtuous man, every moment of his life, he is on the verge of becoming the wicked man's prey or becoming wicked himself. To struggle and suffer, such is his fate in this world: to do evil and suffer, is that of the dishonest man. In everything else they differ, they have nothing

in common but life's miseries. If you required authorities and facts, I could cite you oracles, wise men's replies, acts of virtue rewarded by death. Let us leave all that aside, Milord; it is to you I am speaking, and I ask you, what is the principal occupation of the wise man here below, if not to distill himself, so to speak, into the recesses of his soul, and attempt to be dead while he lives? The only means reason has found to spare us humanity's woes, is it not to detach us from worldly objects and all that is mortal in us, to meditate within ourselves, raise ourselves to sublime contemplations; and if our passions and errors cause our misfortunes, with what zeal ought we not yearn for a condition that delivers us from both? What do these sensual men do by so indiscreetly multiplying their sufferings by their voluptuous delights? They obliterate so to speak their existence by dint of expanding it on earth; they compound the weight of their chains by the number of their attachments; they have no ecstasies but that lay in store for them a thousand bitter deprivations: the more they feel, the more they suffer: the more they plunge into life, the more unhappy they are.

But I am ready to concede that in general, it is if one so wishes a good thing for man to crawl sadly over the surface of the earth: I do not pretend that all of humankind should immolate itself by common consent, nor turn the earth into a vast graveyard. There are, there are indeed some wretched creatures too privileged to follow the common road, and for whom despair and bitter sufferings are nature's passport. In their case it would be as foolish to believe their life a good as it was for the Sophist Possidonius, tormented with gout, to deny it was an evil.[89] As long as it is good for us to live we desire it strongly, and nothing but the experience of extreme suffering can overcome in us this desire: for we have all received from nature an enormous horror of death, and this horror conceals from our eyes the miseries of the human condition. One long endures a painful and doleful life before resigning oneself to relinquishing it; but once the weariness of living overcomes the horror of dying, then life is obviously a great evil, and one cannot too soon be freed from it. Thus, although one cannot identify the precise point where it ceases being a good, at least one knows with certainty that it is an evil long before it so appears to us, and in every rational man the right to relinquish it comes well ahead of the temptation to do so.

This is not all: after denying that life can be an evil, in order to deprive us of our right to do away with it, they then say it is an evil, in order to reproach us for our inability to endure it. According to them it is craven to elude its sufferings and pains, and none but cowards precipitate their own death. O Rome, conqueror of the world, what a host of cowards gave thee empire over it! If Arria, Empona, Lucretia are among them, that is because

they were women.[90] But Brutus, but Cassius,[91] and thou who shared with the Gods the respects of a dumbfounded world, great and divine Cato, thou whose august and sacred image used to inspire the Romans with a holy zeal and make Tyrants quake, thy proud admirers never thought that one day in the dusty corner of a college, vile Rhetors would prove thou wert a mere coward, for having denied to triumphant crime the tribute of virtue in fetters.[92] Power and greatness of modern writers, how sublime you are; and how intrepid they are with pen in hand! But tell me, brave and valiant hero who so courageously flee the battlefield so you can endure life's burden longer: when a burning ember happens to fall on this eloquent hand, why do you retract it so suddenly? What! You have the cravenness not to dare bearing the heat of the fire! Nothing, say you, obliges me to bear the ember; and I, who obliges me to bear life? Did it cost providence more effort to engender a man than a straw, and are not the two equally its handiwork?

There is courage, no doubt, in suffering with constancy ills one cannot avoid; but only a fool would willingly suffer those he can elude without doing wrong, and it is often a very great wrong to endure a wrong needlessly. He who is unable to deliver himself from a painful life through a prompt death is like the man who prefers to let a wound fester rather than entrust it to the salutary knife of a surgeon. Come, worthy Parisot,*[93] cut off this leg of mine which is going to kill me. I will watch you do it without raising an eyebrow, and let myself be called a coward by the braggart who watches his own leg rot for fear of facing the same operation.

I admit there are duties toward others, which do not allow every man to dispose of himself, but on the other hand how many are there that command it? Let a Magistrate on whom the fatherland's welfare depends, let a paterfamilias who owes subsistence to his children, let an insolvent debtor who would ruin his creditors, devote themselves to their duty come what may; let a thousand other civil and domestic ties force an honorable unfortunate to bear the misfortune of living, so as to avoid the greater misfortune of being unjust, can one, for that, in completely different circumstances, preserve at the expense of a multitude of wretches a life that is useful solely to the man who dares not die? Kill me, my child, says the decrepit savage to his son who carries him bending under the weight; the enemy is upon us; go fight with your brothers, go save your children, and do not expose your father to falling alive into the hands of those whose relatives he ate. Even if hunger, pains, misery, these domestic enemies worse than savages, allowed a wretched cripple to consume in his bed the bread

* A Surgeon from Lyon, man of honor, good Citizen, tender and generous friend, neglected, but not forgotten by one who was honored by his kindnesses.

of a family that can scarcely earn enough for itself; why should the man who has no ties, the man Heaven has reduced to living alone on earth, the man whose wretched existence can yield nothing good, not have at least the right to quit an abode where his moans are bothersome and his sufferings fruitless?

Weigh these considerations, Milord; combine all these reasons and you will find that they come down to the simplest of natural rights which a reasonable man never questioned. Indeed, why should it be permissible to be cured of the gout and not of life? Are not the one and the other sent to us by the same hand? If dying is painful, what does that matter? Is it pleasant to take drugs? How many people prefer death to medicine? Proof that nature abhors both. Let them show me why it is more permissible to deliver oneself from a passing illness by using remedies, than from an incurable illness by taking one's life, or why one is less blameworthy for taking quinine for fever than opium for stones.[94] If we consider the objective, each serves to deliver us from ill-being; if we consider the means, each is equally natural; if we consider their abhorrence, it is equal on both sides; if we consider the master's will, what illness could one combat that he has not sent upon us? what suffering could one elude that comes not from his hand? What is the point where his power ends, and where one can legitimately resist? Is it then not permissible for us to change the state of anything, because all that is, is as he has willed it? Must one do nothing in this world for fear of violating his laws, and whatever we do can we ever violate them? No Milord, man's vocation is greater and nobler. God has not breathed life into him in order for him to remain immobile in a perpetual quietism.[95] But he has given him freedom to do good, conscience to will it, and reason to choose it. He has constituted him sole judge of his own acts. He has written in his heart: do what is good for you and harmful to no one. If I feel it is right for me to die, I resist his command by clinging obstinately to life; for by making my death desirable, he instructs me to seek it.

Bomston, I appeal to your wisdom and your candor; what more certain maxims can reason deduce from Religion concerning willful death? If the Christians have established others contrary to them, they have drawn them neither from the principles of their Religion, nor from its unique rule, which is Scripture, but solely from pagan philosophers. Lactantius and Augustine,[96] who first put forward this new doctrine on which neither Jesus Christ nor the Apostles had said a single word, founded themselves solely on the reasoning in the *Phaedo* which I have already contested; and so it is that the faithful who believe they are following in this the authority of the Gospel, are merely following Plato's. Indeed, where will one find in

the entire Bible a law against suicide, or even a simple disapproval; and is it not quite strange that in the examples of people who have taken their own lives, not a word of blame is found against any of these examples? Furthermore, Samson's is sanctioned by a wonder that avenges him of his enemies. Would this miracle have been performed to justify a crime, and would this man who lost his strength for having allowed a woman to seduce him[97] have recovered it to commit an authentic crime, as if God himself had wished to deceive mankind?

Thou shalt not kill, says the Decalogue.[98] What follows from this? If this commandment is to be taken literally, one must kill neither evildoers nor enemies; and Moses who brought about the death of so many people had a very poor understanding of his own precept. If there are a few exceptions, the first of them is certainly in favor of willful death, because it is free of violence and injustice, the only two criteria that can make homicide criminal, and because nature has, besides, created sufficient obstacle to it.

But, they further say, suffer patiently the ills that God sends your way; count your pains as a merit. How poorly it is to grasp the spirit of Christianity, to apply its maxims thus! Man is subject to a thousand ills, his life is a web of miseries, and he seems born only to suffering. Of these ills, reason will have him avoid those he can avoid, and Religion, which never goes counter to reason, approves. But how small is their sum compared to those he is forced to suffer despite himself! These are the ones a merciful God allows men to count for merit; he accepts as homage freely given the mandatory tribute he imposes on us, and imputes to the benefit of the next life our resignation in this one. Man's true penitence is imposed on him by nature; if he patiently endures everything he is constrained to endure, he has done in this respect everything that God requires of him, and if anyone is arrogant enough to pretend he can go beyond that, he is a madman who ought to be locked up, or an impostor who ought to be punished. Let us then flee without qualm all the ills we can flee, there will always be only too many left for us to suffer. Let us deliver ourselves without remorse from life itself, once it has become an ill for us; since it is within our power to do so, and since in doing so we offend neither God nor men. If something must be sacrificed to the Supreme Being, is dying nothing? Let us offer to God the death he imposes on us through the voice of reason, and commit peacefully to his bosom our soul which he reclaims from us.

Such are the general precepts that good sense dictates to all men and Religion sanctions.* Let us return to us. You have been willing to open

* The strange letter for the deliberation in question! Does one reason so peacefully over such a question, when one examines it for oneself? Is the letter a fabrication, or does the Author want nothing more than to be refuted? What could be grounds for doubt is the example

your heart to me; I know your sufferings[99]; you suffer no less than I; your ills like mine are without remedy, and all the more since the laws of honor are more immutable than those of fortune. You endure them, I concede, steadfastly. Virtue sustains you; one step farther, it releases you. You urge me to suffer: Milord, I dare urge you to put an end to your sufferings, and I let you be the judge which of us cherishes the other more.

Why postpone taking a step that must in any case be taken? Shall we wait until old age and years attach us basely to life after taking away its charms, and until we trail about with effort, ignominy, and pain a body crippled and bent over? We are at the age when the soul's vigor easily releases itself from its fetters, and when man still knows how to die; later on he wailingly lets life be wrested from him. Let us take advantage of a time when the weariness of life makes death desirable; let us beware lest it come with its horrors at the moment when we no longer want it. I remember, there was a moment when I asked Heaven for but an hour, and would have died of despair had I not obtained it.[100] Ah how painful it is to break the ties that bind our hearts to earth, and how wise it is to give it up as soon as they are broken! I can feel, Milord, that we are both worthy of a dwelling more pure; virtue points us the way, and fate beckons us to seek it. May the friendship that joins us unite us once more in our last hour. O what ecstasy for two true friends to end their days willingly in each other's arms, to mingle their last sighs, breathe forth at once the two halves of their soul! What pain, what regret can poison their last instants? What do they leave behind in departing the world? They go off together; they leave nothing behind.

LETTER XXII

Reply

Young man, you are being carried away by a blind transport; restrain yourself; do not give counsel while you are seeking it. I have known other ills than yours. My soul is staunch; I am an Englishman, I know how to

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of Robeck he cites, and which seems to furnish him a precedent. Robeck deliberated so soberly that he had the patience to write a book, a big book, a good long, ponderous, cold book, and once he had established, as he saw it, that it was permissible to take one's own life, he did so with the same tranquillity. Let us be wary of prejudices of period and nation. When killing oneself is not in fashion, one imagines that only crazy people kill themselves; all acts of courage are so many fancies to feeble souls; every man judges the others only by himself. Yet have we not many attested examples of men wise on every other count, who, without remorse, without fury, without despair, relinquish life solely because it is a burden to them, and die more tranquilly than they have lived?

die, for I know how to live, to suffer like a man. I have seen death at close range, and consider it with too much detachment to go seeking it out. Let us talk about you.

It is true, you were necessary to me; my soul needed yours; your assistance could prove useful to me; your reason could possibly enlighten me in the most important concern of my life; if I make no use of it, whose fault do you think that is? Where is it? What has become of it? What can you do? What good are you in your present condition? What services can I expect from you? Unreasonable sorrows render you dumb and merciless. You are not a man; you are nothing; and if I did not take into account what you are capable of being, such as you are I see nothing in this world beneath you.

The only proof I need is your Letter itself. Formerly I found sense, truth in you. Your sentiments were straightforward, your reasoning was clear, and I loved you not only by affinity but by choice as another means for me to cultivate wisdom. What have I now found in the reasonings of this Letter you seem so smug about? A miserable and perpetual sophism which by the distractions of your reason indicates those of your heart, and which I would not even bother pointing out had I not taken pity on your ranting.

To overthrow all that in a word, I need ask you only one thing. You who believe in God's existence, the soul's immortality, and man's freedom, do not think, no doubt, that an intelligent being receives a body and is placed on earth at random, merely to live, suffer, and die? There is indeed, perhaps, in human life a goal, an end, a moral objective? I beg you to answer me clearly on this point; after which we will take up your letter step by step, and you will blush for having written it.

But let us leave aside general maxims, of which often much ado is made without any of them ever being followed; for there is always in the application some particular circumstance that so changes the state of things that everyone believes himself dispensed from obeying the rule he prescribes to others, and we know full well that any man who posits general maxims expects them to oblige everyone, except himself. Once more let us talk about you.

So you are entitled, in your opinion, to cease living? The proof is a strange one; it is that you want to die. That is to be sure a convenient argument for scoundrels: They must be most obliged to you for the weapons you furnish them; there will no longer be any crimes they will not justify by the temptation to commit them, and once the violence of passion has won out over the horror of crime, in the desire of doing evil they will also see the right to do so.

So you are entitled to cease to live? What I would like to know is whether

you have even begun? What! Were you placed on earth to do nothing here? Did Heaven not assign to you along with life a task to fill it? If you have done your day's work before evening, rest for what remains of the day, that you can do; but let us have a look at how much you have accomplished. What answer do you have ready for the Supreme Judge who will ask for an account of your time? Speak up, what will you tell him? I have seduced an honest maiden. I abandon a friend amidst his troubles. Poor fool! find me that righteous man who boasts he has lived enough; let me learn from him how one must have borne life so as to have the right to relinquish it.[101]

You enumerate humanity's ills. You do not blush at exhausting commonplaces rehashed a hundred times, and you say: life is an evil. But, look about, search in the order of things, whether you can find in it any good things that are not admixed with evil. Is this then to say that there is no good in creation, and can you confuse what is evil by nature with what suffers evil only by accident? As you yourself have said, man's passive life is nothing, and concerns only a body from which he will soon be delivered; but his active and moral life, which must influence his whole being, consists in the exercise of his will. Life is an evil for the wicked man who prospers, and a good for the honorable man who is unfortunate: for it is not a passing modification, but its relationship to its objective that makes it good or bad. What are after all these painful sorrows that force you to relinquish it? Do you think that I have not detected beneath your feigned impartiality in counting up the evils of this life the shame of speaking of your own? Heed my advice, do not abandon all your virtues at once. Keep at least your former frankness, and tell your friend openly: I have lost the hope of corrupting an honest woman, so here I am forced to be a man of honor; I would rather die.

You tire of living, and you say: life is an evil. Sooner or later you will be consoled, and you will say: life is good. You will be closer to the truth without reasoning any better: for nothing will have changed but you. That being so, change right away, and since all the evil is in the ill disposition of your soul, amend your disorderly affections, and do not burn your house down to avoid the bother of putting it in order.

I suffer, you tell me? Is it in my power not to suffer? First, this changes the status of the question; for the problem is not whether you suffer, but whether it is an ill for you to live. Let us go on. You suffer, you must seek to put an end to your suffering. Let us examine whether that calls for dying.

Consider a moment the natural progress of the soul's ills directly opposite the progress of the body's, as the two substances are opposite by nature. The latter become chronic, worsen with age, and finally destroy this

mortal machine.[102] The former, on the contrary, external and temporary alterations of an immortal and simple[103] being, fade away little by little and leave it in its original form which nothing could ever change. Sorrow, woe, regrets, despair are short-lived pains that never take root in the soul, and experience ever belies that sentiment of bitterness that makes us regard our sufferings as eternal. I will say more; I cannot believe that the vices that corrupt us are more ingrained in us than our troubles; not only do I think they disappear with the body that occasions them; but I do not doubt that a longer life could allow men to be reformed, and that several centuries of youth would teach us that there is nothing better than virtue.

However that may be, since most of our physical ills only increase endlessly, excruciating bodily pain, when it is incurable, may justify a man's disposing of himself: for all his faculties being estranged by pain, and the evil being without remedy, he no longer has use of either his will or his reason; he ceases to be a man before he dies, and by taking his own life merely completes the separation from a body that bogs him down and where already his soul no longer is.

But such is not the case with pains of the soul, which, however acute, always bring the remedy with them. Indeed, what makes any ill intolerable? It is its duration. The operations of surgery are commonly much more cruel than the sufferings they heal; but the ill's pain is permanent, the operation's temporary, and we prefer the latter. What need is there then for an operation for pains that are assuaged by their own duration, which alone would make them unbearable? Is it reasonable to apply such violent remedies to ills that fade away by themselves? To anyone who prizes constancy and avoids valuing years more than they are worth, which of two means of delivering himself from the same sufferings is to be preferred, death or time? Wait and you will be healed. What more do you ask?

Ah! it only compounds my suffering to think it will end! The vain sophism of grief! The clever phrase devoid of reason, of accuracy, and perhaps of good faith. What an absurd excuse for despair is the hope of ending one's misery!* Even supposing this bizarre sentiment, who would not rather sharpen the present pain for a moment with the assurance of seeing it end, as one scrapes a wound to make it scab? And if pain had a charm that made us love suffering, would not depriving ourselves of it by taking our life be to accomplish at that very instant everything we fear from the future?

* No, Milord, this is not the way to put an end to one's misery, but to consummate it; one breaks the last ties linking us to happiness. While mourning the person we cherished, we are still attached to the object of our suffering through the suffering itself, and this condition is less awful than being attached to nothing at all.

Think about that, young man; what are ten, twenty, thirty years to an immortal being? Pain and pleasure pass like a shadow; life is gone in an instant; it is nothing in itself, its worth depends on its use. The good one has done alone remains, and it is through it that life amounts to something.

Therefore say no more that for you it is an evil to live, since it is in your power alone to make it a good, and if it is an evil to have lived, that is another reason to live on. Do not say, either, that you are entitled to die; for it would be as good to say that you are entitled not to be a man, entitled to rebel against the author of your being, and betray your purpose. But when you add that your death does no one harm, are you forgetting that it is to your friend you dare to say this?

Your death does no one harm? I see! to die at our expense hardly matters to you, you count our mourning for nothing. I am not talking now about the rights of friendship, which you dismiss; are there not yet dearer ones* that oblige you to preserve yourself? If there is one person on earth who has loved you enough not to wish to survive you, and whose happiness is incomplete without yours, do you think you owe her nothing? Will your lethal designs once carried out not trouble the peace of a soul restored with such difficulty to its original innocence? Do you not fear reopening in this too tender heart wounds that are poorly healed? Do you not fear that your loss will bring about another yet more cruel, by depriving the world and virtue of their worthiest ornament? And if she survives you, do you not fear provoking remorse in her breast, heavier to bear than life? Ungrateful friend, indelicate lover, will you always be preoccupied with yourself? Will you never be mindful of anything but your pains? Are you not at all sensible to the happiness of that which you cherished? And could you not manage to live for her who intended to die with you?

You mention the duties of the magistrate and paterfamilias, and because they are not imposed on you, you think you are completely uncommitted. How about society to which you owe your preservation, your talents, your lights; the fatherland to which you belong, the wretched who need you, do you owe them nothing? Oh what an impeccable enumeration you make! Among the duties you count, you forget only those of man and Citizen. Where is that virtuous patriot who refuses to sell his blood to a foreign prince because he must shed it only for his country, and who now, a desperate man, means to shed it against the express injunction of the laws? The laws, the laws, Young man! Does the wise man scorn them? Guiltless Socrates, out of respect for them was unwilling to leave prison.[104] You do

* Rights dearer than those of friendship? And it is a sage who says this! But this putative sage was himself in love.

not hesitate to violate them in order to leave life unjustly, and you ask: what harm am I doing?

You try to justify yourself with examples. You dare to cite me Romans! You, Romans! Some right you have to dare pronounce those illustrious names! Tell me, did Brutus die a desperate lover, and did Cato rip out his entrails for his mistress? Petty, feeble man, what is shared between Cato and you? Show me the common measure between that sublime soul and yours. Brash fellow, hush! I fear profaning his name by eulogizing him. Before that holy and august name, every friend of virtue ought to bury his forehead in the dust, and honor in silence the memory of the greatest of men.

How ill chosen your examples are, and what low esteem you hold Romans in, if you think they believed they were entitled to take their lives as soon as they seemed onerous. Look at the prime of the Republic, and see whether you will find there a single virtuous citizen delivering himself thus from the weight of his duties, even after the cruellest of misfortunes. Did Regulus returning to Carthage avert by his death the torments that awaited him?[105] What would Posthumius not have given to enjoy that resource at the Caudine Forks?[106] What effort of courage did the Senate itself not admire in the Consul Varro for having managed to survive his defeat?[107] For what reason did so many Generals willingly allow themselves to be delivered to their enemies, they to whom ignominy was so cruel, and to whom dying was of so little price? It is because they owed their blood, their lives, and their last breath to the fatherland, and because neither shame nor setbacks could turn them aside from that sacred duty. But when the Laws were abolished and the State was a prey to Tyrants, the Citizens reclaimed their natural liberty and their rights over themselves. When Rome was no longer, it was permissible for Romans to cease to exist; they had fulfilled their functions on earth, they had lost their fatherland, they were entitled to dispose of themselves, and restore to themselves the liberty they could no longer restore to their country. After using their life in the service of expiring Rome and fighting for law, they died virtuous and great as they had lived, and their death was yet another tribute to the glory of the Roman name, that in none of them should be held up the unworthy spectacle of true Citizens serving a usurper.

But you, who are you? What have you done? Do you think your obscurity is an excuse? Does your weakness exempt you from your duties, and does having neither name nor rank in your Fatherland make you less subject to its laws? Some right you have to dare speak of dying while you owe the use of your life to your fellow men! Know that a death such as you contemplate is dishonorable and devious. It is a larceny committed against

mankind. Before you take your leave of it, give it back what it has done for you. But I have no attachments? I am of no use to the world? Philosopher for a day! Have you not learned that you could not take a step on earth without finding some duty to fulfill, and that every man is useful to humanity, by the very fact that he exists?

Listen to me, mad youth; you are dear to me; I pity your errors. If you still have deep in your heart the least sentiment of virtue, come, let me teach you to love life. Every time you are tempted to exit it, say to yourself: "Let me do one more good deed before I die." Then go find someone needy to assist, someone unfortunate to console, someone oppressed to defend. Reconcile me with the wretched who are too intimidated to approach me; do not fear to squander either my purse or my influence: help yourself; exhaust my fortune, make me rich. If this consideration hold you back today, it will hold you back again tomorrow, the day after tomorrow, your whole life long. If it does not; die, you are nothing but an evil man.

LETTER XXIII

From Milord Edward

I will not, my dear man, be able to embrace you today, as I had hoped, and I am being held up another two days at Kensington.[108] The pace of the Court is to work a great deal without getting anything done, and each item of business follows upon the preceding one without coming to a conclusion. The business that has been keeping me here for a week did not require two hours; but as Ministers' most important business is always to appear busy, they waste more time putting me off than they would have spent finishing with me. My rather too visible impatience does not shorten these delays. You know that I am not at all made for Court life; it is even more unbearable now that we are living in company, and I would a hundred times rather share your melancholy than the boredom of the valets who people this country.[109]

However, as I conversed with these officious idlers, an idea came to me concerning you, and with respect to which I await only your leave to dispose of you. I can see that in battling your pains you suffer at once from the disease and the effort. If you want to live and recover, it is less because honor and reason require it than out of deference to your friends. My dear man, that is not enough. One must rediscover the taste for life again in order to fulfill its duties well, and with such indifference toward all things, one never succeeds at anything. Whatever we both do, reason alone will not give you your reason back. What is needed is a multitude of new and

striking objects that will capture a part of the attention your heart pays only to the object that now occupies it. What is needed for you to become yourself again is for you to turn yourself outward, and it is only in the bustle of an active life that you can hope to recover peace of mind.[110]

To put this to the test, an opportunity presents itself which is not to be dismissed; there is in the offing a grand, fine enterprise, the likes of which many eras never see. If you so desire you can be witness to it and take part in it. You will behold the grandest spectacle that can ever strike men's eyes; your taste for observation will find ample subject for gratification. Your functions will be honorable, they will require, along with talents you possess, only courage and health. They will make you incur more peril than constraints; they will suit you only the better; finally your commitment will not be very lengthy. I can tell you no more about this today, because the project about to come to light is nonetheless still a secret I am not at liberty to reveal. I shall simply add that if you neglect this happy and rare opportunity, you will probably never find another, and will, perhaps, regret it the rest of your life.

I have ordered my Runner, who bears you this Letter, to find you wherever you may be, and not to return without your reply; for it is pressing, and I must give mine before I leave here.

LETTER XXIV

Reply

Go ahead, Milord; dispose of me; you will in no wise be belied. Until the time when I shall deserve to be of service to you, let me at least obey you.

LETTER XXV

From Milord Edward

Since you approve the idea that came to me, I wish not to lose a moment in informing you that everything has been arranged, and in explaining to you what it is all about, as I have been authorized to do in committing my word for you.

You know that a Fleet of five Warships has just been outfitted at Plymouth, and that it is ready to set sail. It is to be commanded by Mr. George Anson, an able and valiant Officer, an old friend of mine. Its destination is the South sea,[111] where it is to arrive through the straight of Le

Maire,[112] and return via the east Indies. Thus you see that no less is involved than a trip around the world, an expedition that is expected to last about three years. I could have had you enrolled as a volunteer; but in order to give you more consideration among the crew I had a designation added to it, and you are listed in the register in the capacity of Engineer of the landing force; which suits you all the better since, being originally destined for engineering, I know you have studied it since childhood.

I expect to return to London tomorrow* and introduce you to Mr. Anson two days hence. In the meantime, see to your equipage, and to getting yourself supplied with Instruments and Books; for they are ready to embark, and await only their sailing orders. My dear friend, I hope God will bring you back safe of body and heart from this long voyage, and upon your return we shall get together again never more to separate.

LETTER XXVI

To Madame d'Orbe

I am off, dear and charming Cousin, to sail around the globe; I am going to seek in another hemisphere the peace I have not been able to enjoy in this one. Fool that I am! I am going to wander the world over without finding a place to rest my heart; I am going to seek a sanctuary somewhere in the world where I can be far from you! But I must defer to the wishes of a friend, a benefactor, a father. Without hope of a cure, I still must wish for one, since Julie and virtue so command. In three hours I shall be at the mercy of the waves; in three days, I shall lose sight of Europe; in three months I shall be in unexplored seas ruled by perpetual storms; in three years perhaps.... how awful it would be never to see you again! Alas! the greatest peril lies deep in my heart: for whatever my fate may be; I have resolved, and I swear, that either you will see me worthy to stand before your eyes, or you will never behold me again.

Milord Edward who is returning to Rome will deliver you this letter on his way, and give you a full account of my situation. You know his soul, and you will easily divine what he does not tell you. You once knew mine; surmise as well what I myself am not telling you. Ah Milord! Your eyes will behold them again!

So your friend like yourself is blessed to be a mother! Such she was then

* I do not understand this very well. Kensington being only a quarter-league from London, the Lords who go to Court do not stay over; yet here is Milord Edward being forced to spend goodness knows how many days there.

destined to be?.... Impervious Heaven!.... O mother mine, why in its anger did it give you a son?....

I must close, I know. Farewell, charming Cousins. Farewell, incomparable Beauties. Farewell, pure and celestial souls. Farewell, tender and inseparable friends, women unique on earth. Each of you is the only object worthy of the other's heart. Make your mutual happiness together. Deign to recall sometimes the memory of an unfortunate who existed only to divide between you all the sentiments of his soul, and who ceased living the moment he left you. If ever.... I hear the signal, and the Sailors' cries; I can see the wind picking up and the sails being unfurled. I must go on board, I must depart. Vast sea, boundless sea, which wilt perhaps swallow me up into thy bosom; let me find again on thy waves the calm that evades my troubled heart!

End of Part Three.

Part Four

LETTER I

From Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe

How long it is taking you to return here! I am not happy with all these comings and goings. How many hours are wasted getting you to where you ought always to be, and still worse taking you away! The thought of seeing each other for such a short time spoils the whole pleasure of being together. Do you not sense that being thus by turns at your place or mine is to be at home at neither, and can you not imagine some means by which you might be at once at your place and mine?

What are we doing, my dear Cousin? How many precious instants are we letting slip past, when we have none left to give away! The years are adding up; youth is beginning to recede; life is flowing past; the fleeting happiness it offers us is in our hands, and we neglect to enjoy it! Do you recall the time when we were still girls, those early times, so charming and sweet, that are not again to be found at a later age, and that the heart forgets with such regret? How many times, when obliged to separate for only a few days and even a few hours, we would say as we sadly embraced: Ah! if ever we are our own mistresses, we will never again be separated? But here we are mistresses of ourselves, and we spend half the year far from each other. Well, then! is it because we love each other less? we both are feeling, dear and tender friend, to what extent time, habit, and your kindnesses have made our attachment stronger and more indissoluble. To me, your absence seems each day more unbearable, and I cannot live a moment longer without you. This progress in our friendship is more natural than it appears: its reason is to be found in our situation as well as our characters. As one advances in age all the sentiments become more concentrated. Every day one loses something that was once held dear, and it cannot be replaced. And so we die a little at a time, until ultimately loving only oneself, one has ceased to feel and live before one has ceased to exist. But a sensible heart resists this premature death with all its strength; when the limbs begin to grow cold, it collects all its natural warmth around itself; the more it loses, the more attached it becomes to what remains; and it holds to the last object, so to speak, by its ties to all the others.

That is what I think I am experiencing already, though still young. Ah! my dear, my poor heart did love so! It exhausted itself so early that it is aging before its time, and so many diverse affections have so absorbed it that it has no room left for new attachments. You have seen me successively daughter, friend, lover, wife, and mother. You know whether all these names have been dear to me! Some of these ties are destroyed, others are distended. My mother, my tender mother is no more; I now have nothing but tears to give her memory, and I can partake only by half of nature's sweetest sentiment. Love is dead, it is dead forever, and that again is a spot that will not be filled. We have lost your worthy and good husband whom I loved as the dear half of yourself, and who so well deserved your tenderness and my friendship. If my sons were older, a mother's love would fill all these voids. But that love, as well as all the others, requires communication, and what reciprocity can a mother expect from a child of four or five? We cherish our children long before they can sense it and love us in return; and yet, one has so great a need to tell how much one loves them to someone who can understand us! My husband understands me; but he does not respond enough to me for my fancy; his mind is not all a-dither with them like mine: his tenderness for them is too reasonable; I want a more active one and one more like mine. I need a friend, a mother who is as dotty as me about my children and her own. In a word, to me motherhood makes friendship even more necessary, for the pleasure of talking endlessly about my children, without boring anybody. It seems to me I doubly enjoy my little Marcellin's caresses when I see you sharing them. When I embrace your daughter, I imagine it is you I am pressing to my breast. We have said it a hundred times, as we watch our little Tykes playing together, our hearts joined as one cease to distinguish between them, and we no longer know to whom each of the three belongs.

This is not all, I have excellent reasons for wanting you constantly by my side, and to me your absence is cruel in more than one respect. Consider my dislike for all dissimulation and this continual reserve in which I have been living for nearly six years with the man whom I most cherish on earth.[1] My awful secret weighs more and more heavily upon me, and seems to become more indispensable each day. The more honesty urges me to reveal it, the more prudence obliges me to keep it. Can you conceive what a dreadful state it is for a wife to carry mistrust, untruth, and fear into her husband's very arms, not to dare opening her heart to him who owns it, and to hide half of her life from him in order to ensure the peace of the other? From whom, great God! must I disguise my innermost thoughts and conceal the depths of a soul that ought to please him so much? From Monsieur de Wolmar, from my husband, from the worthiest spouse Heaven

could have given to reward the virtue of a chaste maiden! For having deceived him once, I have to deceive him every day, and feel myself forever unworthy of all his kindnesses toward me. My heart dares accept no token of his esteem; his tenderest caresses make me blush, and all the marks of respect and consideration he affords me change in my conscience into opprobrium and signs of disdain. It is indeed hard to have forever to say to oneself: it is not me but another he honors. Ah if he knew me, he would not treat me so! No, I cannot bear this awful state; I am never alone with this respectable man without being on the verge of falling to my knees before him, confessing my fault to him, and dying of grief and shame at his feet.

Yet the reasons that have held me back from the beginning take on new force each day, and I have not a single motive for speaking up that is not also a reason for keeping silent. When I consider my family's peaceable and placid situation, I cannot think without dread about the fact that a single word can occasion an irreparable disorder within it. After six years spent in such a perfect union, shall I go troubling the peace of so wise and good a husband, who has no other will than that of his happy wife, nor other pleasure than to see order and peace reign in his house? Shall I sadden with domestic troubles the old age of a father whom I see so content, so enchanted with his daughter's and his friend's happiness? Shall I expose these dear children, these amiable children who have such promise, to receiving nothing better than a neglected or scandalous education, to finding themselves the sad victims of their parents' discord, between a father fired with righteous indignation, ridden with jealousy, and a miserable and criminal mother, constantly bathed in tears? I know a Monsieur de Wolmar who esteems his wife; how do I know what he would be like if he no longer did? Perhaps he is so moderate only because the passion that would be dominant in his character has not yet had occasion to develop. Perhaps he will be as violent in a fit of anger as he is gentle and tranquil so long as he has no cause for irritation.

If I owe so much regard to all those about me, do I not owe some to myself as well? Do six years of an honest and regular life expunge none of the errors of youth, and must I expose myself again to the punishment for a fault I have been mourning for so long? I confess, my Cousin, I do not without reluctance turn my eyes on the past; it humiliates me to the point of discouragement, and I am too sensible to shame to bear the thought of it without falling back into a sort of despair. The time that has gone by since my marriage is the time I must fix upon to reassure myself. My present condition inspires a confidence in me that importunate memories would seek to take away. I like to nurture my heart with the sentiments of

honor that I seem to rediscover in myself. The status of wife and mother uplifts my soul and sustains me against the remorse of an earlier condition. When I behold my children and their father round about me, it seems to me that everything is redolent of virtue; they banish from my spirit the very thought of my former faults. Their innocence is the safeguard of my own; they thus become the dearer to me by making me better, and I have such horror for anything that offends honesty that I can scarcely believe I am the same person who once was able to forget it. I feel so far removed from what I was, so sure of what I am, that I very nearly regard what I would have to say as a confession that is foreign to me and that I am no longer obliged to make.

So you see the state of uncertainty and anxiety I constantly hover in while you are absent. Do you know what will come of all this some day? My father is soon to leave for Bern, resolved not to return until he has seen to a conclusion that long lawsuit, which he doesn't want to leave us saddled with, and not much trusting either, I think, our zeal in pursuing it. In the interval between his departure and return, I shall remain alone with my husband, and I sense that it will be almost impossible for my fatal secret not to escape me. When we have company, you know how Monsieur de Wolmar often absents himself and likes to walk alone about the neighborhood; he chats with the peasants; he inquires about their situation; he looks over the condition of their fields; he helps them when needed with his purse and his advice. But when we are alone, he walks only with me; he seldom leaves his wife and children's side, and lends himself to their little games with such charming simplicity that then I feel for him something more tender than usual. These sentimental moments are all the more threatening to my reserve, in that he himself furnishes me opportunities for lacking it, and he has a hundred times said things that seemed to urge me to confide in him. Sooner or later I shall have to open my heart to him, I can tell; but since you want it to be by agreement between us, and with all the precautions that prudence allows, come back and make your absences less prolonged; or I no longer answer for anything.

My sweet friend, I must get to the point, and what remains is so important that it is the most difficult for me to say. You are not necessary to me only when I am with my children or with my husband, but above all when I am alone with your poor Julie, and solitude is dangerous for me precisely because it agrees with me, and because I often seek it instinctively. It is not, as you know, that my heart still feels its old wounds; no, it is healed, I can tell, I am very sure of it, I dare to believe myself virtuous. It is not the present I fear; it is the past that torments me. Some memories are as threatening as present sentiment; reminiscence brings back tender

thoughts; one is ashamed to find oneself weeping, and weeps only the more. These are tears of pity, of regret, of repentance; love no longer has any part in them; it is nothing to me now; but I weep for the harm it has caused; I weep for the fate of a worthy man whom a recklessly fueled flame has bereft of peace and perhaps of life. Alas! No doubt he has perished in this long and perilous voyage which despair led him to undertake. If he were living, from the ends of the earth he would have given us news of himself; nearly four years have gone by since his departure. They say the squadron he was with has suffered a thousand disasters, that it has lost three-quarters of its crews, that several of its vessels are sunk, that no one knows what has become of the rest. He is no more, he is no more. A secret premonition tells me so. The unfortunate cannot have been any more spared than so many others. The sea, diseases, crueller still sorrow, must have cut his days short. Thus dies out all that shines for a moment on earth. The only thing lacking from the torments of my conscience was the need to blame myself for the death of an honorable man. Ah my dear! What a soul was his!.... what love was his love!.... he deserved to live.... he must have laid before the sovereign judge a soul that was weak, but sound and loving virtue.... I attempt in vain to drive out these sad thoughts; they come back despite me at every instant. To banish them, or master them, your friend has need of your care; and since I cannot forget that unfortunate I had rather talk about him with you than think about him all by myself.

See how many reasons there are to increase my continual need of having you with me! Though you, wiser and happier, have not the same reasons, does your heart less feel the same need? If it is indeed true that you have no intention of remarrying, since you have so little satisfaction from your family,[2] what house can suit you better than ours? For my part, I suffer to know you are in yours; for despite your dissimulation, I know your manner of living there, and am not fooled by the carefree air you come to display to us at Clarens. You have chided me for many shortcomings in my life; but I have a great one to chide you for in turn; it is that your suffering is always mute and solitary. You go into hiding when you grieve, as if you blushed to weep in front of your friend. Claire, I do not like that. I am not unjust like you; I find no fault with your regrets; I do not wish for you after two years, or ten, or your whole lifetime, to cease honoring the memory of so tender a husband; but I find fault with robbing your Julie, after spending your finest days weeping with her, of the comfort of weeping in turn with you, and washing away with worthier tears the shame of the ones she once shed on your breast. If it embarrasses you to grieve, ah! you do not know genuine grief! If you take a sort of pleasure in it, why do you

not want me to share it? Are you not aware that the communion of hearts imbues sadness with a sweet and touching something that contentment does not know? and was friendship not specially given to the unhappy to relieve their woes and comfort their sorrows?

There, my dear, are some things you should consider, to which must be added that in proposing that you come live with me, I am speaking no less in my husband's name than in mine. He has several times seemed to me surprised, almost scandalized, that two friends such as we do not live together; he asserts he has told you this too, and he is not a man to speak hastily. I do not know what decision you will take with respect to my arguments; I have reason to hope it will be such as I desire. Whatever it may be, my own is taken and I will not change it. I have not forgotten the time when you meant to follow me to England. Incomparable friend, now it is my turn. You know my aversion for the city, my taste for the country, for rustic labors, and the attachment that three years' stay has given me for my house at Clarens. Nor are you unaware what a nuisance it is to move with a whole family, and what an abuse it would be of my father's forbearance to transplant him so often. So then, if you do not wish to relinquish your household and come take charge of mine, I have determined to take a house in Lausanne where we shall all go live with you. Make your preparations in consequence; everything calls for it; my heart, my duty, my happiness, my honor preserved, my reason recovered, my condition, my husband, my children, myself, I owe everything to you; everything good I possess comes from you, everything I see calls me back to you, and without you I am nothing. Come then, my beloved, my guardian angel; come preserve your handiwork, come enjoy your own blessings. Let us henceforth have but one family, as we have but one soul to cherish it; you will oversee the education of my sons, I will oversee your daughter's: we will share the duties of motherhood, and double their pleasures. Together we will raise our hearts to him who cleansed mine through your ministries, and having nothing left to desire in this world we shall peacefully await the next life in the bosom of innocence and friendship.

LETTER II

Reply

My goodness, Cousin, what pleasure your letter gave me! The charming preacher!.... charming, in truth. But preacher all the same. Splendid orations: almost nothing about works. The Athenian architect!.... that fancy talker!.... you know... in your old Plutarch.... Pompous descriptions,

a superb temple!.... after he has finished talking, the other one comes forth; a plain man; of simple appearance, grave and poised... like your Cousin Claire, for instance.... In a feeble, slow, and even slightly nasal voice... *what he has said, I will do*. He stops, and all applaud! Exit the phrase-monger.[3] My child, we are these two Architects; the temple in question is that of friendship.

Let us summarize a bit the fancy things you have said to me. First of all, that we love each other; and then that I am necessary to you; and then, that you also are to me; and then, that being free to spend our days together, we must do so. And you came by this all by yourself? On my word you are an eloquent person! Well now, let me tell you what I have been up to on my part, while you were elaborating that sublime letter. After that, you yourself will judge which is better, what you say, or what I do.

No sooner had I lost my husband than you filled the void he had left in my heart. During his lifetime he shared its affections with you; once he was gone, I was yours alone, and in keeping with your remark about the correspondence between maternal tenderness and friendship,[4] my daughter herself was but one more tie between us. Not only did I resolve at once to spend the rest of my life with you; but I thought of a more permanent plan. In order to turn our two families into a single one, I had in mind, assuming all the circumstances are appropriate, to marry my daughter to your elder son some day, and that word husband hit upon only in jest[5] seemed to me a favorable omen for giving it to him some day in earnest.

With this intention, I first sought to lift the impediments of a complicated inheritance, and finding that I had enough fortune to sacrifice something to the liquidation of the rest, my only preoccupation was to place my daughter's share in secure funds safe from all litigation. You know I have fancies about many things: my whim in this one was to surprise you. I had this idea of coming one fine morning into your bedroom, holding my child by one hand, and in the other a portfolio, and handing the one and the other over to you with a pretty speech to deposit in your hands the mother, the daughter, and their fortune, that is to say, the latter's dowry. Manage this, I meant to tell you, as befits your son's interests; for it is henceforth his business and yours; as for me I shall have nothing more to do with it.

Full of this charming idea, I had to discuss it with someone who could help me execute it. Now guess whom I chose for this confidence? A certain Monsieur de Wolmar: might you not know him? My husband, Cousin? Yes, your husband, Cousin. The very man from whom you have so much trouble hiding a secret it is important he not know, is the one who managed to keep one from you that you would have been so pleased to learn

about. That was the true subject of all those mysterious interviews you so comically scolded us for. You see how devious these husbands are. Is it not quite amusing that they are the ones who accuse us of deviousness? I demanded still more from yours. I could see very well that you were contemplating the same plan, but more privately, and as one who vents her sentiments only to the degree that we lend ourselves to them. Seeking therefore to prepare a more agreeable surprise for you, I intended that when you should propose our reunion to him, he should not appear greatly to approve such haste, and be rather cool about consenting. Thereupon he made me an answer I have kept in mind, and you must keep well in mind; for I doubt that any husband since there have been husbands on earth has ever made such an answer. Here it is. "Little Cousin, I know Julie.... I know her well.... better than she thinks, perhaps. Her heart is too honest for us to oppose anything she desires, and too sensible to allow us to without distressing her. In the five years we have been united, I do not believe she has received from me the least vexation; I hope to die without ever having caused her one." Cousin, consider this well: such is the husband whose peace of mind you are perpetually thinking of troubling indiscreetly.

For my part, I was less delicate, or had more confidence in your meekness, and the topics your heart often reverted to I so naturally turned aside that, although you could not accuse my heart of cooling with respect to you, you went and put it into your head that I was anticipating a second marriage, and that I loved you better than anything, save a husband. For, you see, my poor child, you have no secret impulse that escapes my attention. I intuit you, I read you; I see to the very bottom of your soul, and that is the reason I have always adored you. That suspicion, which so opportunely distracted you, seemed to me perfect to encourage. I began to play the coquettish widow well enough to fool even you. It is a role for which I lack inclination more than talent. I skillfully used that teasing manner I know pretty well how to adopt, by means of which I have sometimes amused myself mocking more than one young fop. You have been completely duped by it, and believed I was about to seek a successor to the hardest man on earth to replace. But I am too straightforward to be able to feign for long, and you were soon reassured. However, I wish to reassure you even more by explaining my true sentiments on this point.

I told you a hundred times when I was a maiden, I was not meant to be a wife. Had it been up to me, I would not have married. But in our sex, we purchase freedom only through slavery, and we must first be servants in order one day to become our own mistress. Although my father did not constrain me, I suffered vexations within my family. To free myself from

them, I therefore married Monsieur d'Orbe. He was such an honorable man and loved me so tenderly that I loved him sincerely in return. Experience gave me a more advantageous opinion of marriage than the one I had held, and eliminated the impressions of it with which Chaillot had left me. Monsieur d'Orbe made me happy and did not repent of it. With another I would still have fulfilled my duties, but I would have dismayed him, and I feel it took that good a husband to make a good wife of me. Would you imagine that it was precisely on that score that I had complaint? My child, we loved each other too much, we were not cheerful. A more casual friendship would have been more frolicsome; I would have preferred that, and think I would rather have lived less content and been able to laugh more often.

To that were added the particular causes for concern that your situation gave me. I have no need to remind you of the dangers an ill-tamed passion made you incur. It made me shudder to see them. If you had risked only your life, a remnant of gaiety would perhaps not have abandoned me: but sadness and terror took over my soul, and until the day I saw you married, I had not a moment of pure joy. You knew my suffering, you sensed it. It much affected your good heart, and I will never cease blessing those happy tears that are perhaps the cause of your return to righteousness.

This is how all the time I lived with my husband was spent. Judge whether since God took him from me I could hope to find another so to my heart's liking, and whether I am tempted to look for one? No, Cousin, being married is too serious a status; its dignity does not go with my humor; it makes me sad and suits me ill; not to mention that I find all constraint unbearable. Imagine, you who know me, how I must view a relationship in which I did not laugh heartily seven measly times in seven years! Unlike you, I do not mean to play the matron at twenty-eight. I find myself a rather saucy little widow, still quite marriageable, and I believe if I were a man, I would find me much to my liking. But for me to remarry, Cousin! Listen: I very sincerely mourn my poor husband, I would have given half my life to spend the other half with him; and yet, if he could return, I think I would take even him back only because I had taken him before.

I have now exposed to you my true intentions. If I have not yet been able to carry them out despite Monsieur de Wolmar's efforts, it is because the difficulties seem to increase along with my zeal for surmounting them. But my zeal will be the stronger, and before the summer is over, I hope to be reunited with you for the rest of my days.

It remains for me to justify myself against the reproach of hiding my sorrows from you, and preferring to weep far from you; I do not deny it,

that is how I spend the better part of my time here. I never enter my house without coming upon traces of the man who made it dear to me. Here there is no step I take, no object I look upon without perceiving a sign of his tenderness and the goodness of his heart; would you expect my own not to be moved? When I am here, I feel only what I have lost. When I am with you, I see only what I have left. Can you hold it against me that you have such power over my humor? If I weep in your absence, and laugh when I am with you, whence the difference? Little ingrate, it is because you console me for everything, and I can no longer grieve for anything when I possess you.

You have said many things in favor of our old friendship: but I do not forgive you for overlooking the one that does me the most honor: the fact that I cherish you even though you outshine me. My Julie, you are born to reign. Your empire is the most absolute I know. It extends even to the wills of others, and I am more subject to it than anyone. How can that be, Cousin? We both love virtue; we cherish honesty equally, our talents are the same; I have almost as much wit as you, and am hardly less pretty. I know all that very well, and despite it all you daunt me, you subjugate me, you overwhelm me, your genius crushes mine, and I am nothing compared to you. Even while you were maintaining liaisons for which you reproached yourself, and when not having imitated your fault I ought to have exercised sway in my turn, it remained nonetheless in your hands. Your weakness which I deplored seemed almost a virtue to me; I could not keep myself from admiring in you what I would have criticized in another. And so even at that very time, I did not approach you without a certain movement of involuntary respect, and it is certain that it took all your meekness, all the familiarity of your company, to make me your friend; naturally, I should have been your servant. Explain this enigma if you can; for my part, I am at a loss to understand it.

And yet I do, I understand it a little, and even believe I once explained it.[6] It is that your heart vivifies all those around it and gives them so to speak a new being for which they are forced to pay tribute to yours, since they would not have obtained it otherwise. I have rendered you important services, I concede; you remind me so often of it that I could not possibly forget. I do not deny it; without me you were done for. But what more have I done than give back what I had received from you? Is it possible to see you for long without feeling one's soul filled with the charms of virtue and the comforts of friendship? Do you not know that you yourself arm all who approach you for your defense, and that I have over the others only the advantage of Sesostris's guards, that of being of the same age and sex as you, and having been raised alongside you?[7] However that may be, Claire is consoled for being less worthy than Julie, by the fact that without Julie

she would be much less worthy still; and then to tell you the truth, I believe we had considerable need of each other, and that each of us would be much worse off if fate had separated us.

What annoys me the most about the business that is still keeping me here is the risk to your secret, always on the verge of escaping your lips. Consider I beg you that what bids you keep it is a powerful and cogent reason, and what bids you reveal it is just a blind sentiment. Even our suspicions that this secret is already known to the interested party are a further reason to disclose it to him only with the utmost circumspection. Your husband's reserve is perhaps an example and a lesson for us; for in such matters there is often a great difference between what one pretends not to know and what one is forced to know. Wait therefore, I absolutely insist, until we deliberate on it once again. If your premonitions were founded and your lamentable friend were no more, the best decision you could make would be to leave his story and your woes buried with him. If he lives, as I hope, the case may change; but still that case will have to arise. In any event do you think you owe no deference to the last advice of an unfortunate whose sufferings are all our doing?

With respect to the dangers of solitude, I understand and approve your fears, although I know they are very ill-founded. Your past faults make you apprehensive; from this I augur all the better for the present, and you would be less worried if you had still more cause to be. But I cannot allow your alarm over the fate of our poor friend. Now that your affections are of a different kind, be sure that he is no less dear to me than to you. Yet I have premonitions quite opposite yours, and more in keeping with reason. Milord Edward has twice received news of him, and wrote me the second occasion that he was in the Southern sea,[8] having already passed through the dangers you refer to. You know that as well as I do and you grieve as if you knew nothing of it. But what you do not know, and I must tell you, is that the vessel he is on was seen two months ago at the latitude of the Canaries, sailing toward Europe. That is what my father hears from Holland, and what he did not fail to tell me, in accordance with his custom of informing me much more exactly of public matters than of his own. As for me, my heart tells me not much time will pass before we receive news of our philosopher, and that all it will have cost you is your tears, unless after having mourned him dead, you should mourn because he is alive. But, God be thanked, you are no longer that far gone.

> *Deh! fusse or qui quel miser pur un poco,*
> *Ch'è già di pianger et di viver lasso!*[9]
>
> Ah, would that wretch were here even for a little,
> for he is already tired of weeping and of living.

That is what I had to say in reply. She who loves you offers you and shares the flattering expectation of an everlasting reunion. You see that you did not think of the plan either alone nor first, and that its realization is further advanced than you thought. So have patience again for this summer, my sweet friend: it is better to delay our meeting again than have to separate anew.

Well, fair Madame, have I kept my word, and is my victory complete? Down on your knees, now, kiss this letter respectfully, and humbly concede that at least once in her life Julie de Wolmar was surpassed in friendship.*

LETTER III

To Madame d'Orbe

My Cousin, my Benefactress, my friend; I have just returned from the extremities of the earth, and bring back a heart brimming full with you. I have crossed the line[10] four times; I have sailed the two hemispheres; I have seen the four parts of the world[11]; I have put its diameter between us; I have been all the way around the globe and have not been able to escape you one moment.[12] There is no point in fleeing what is dear to us, its image faster than the sea and the winds follows us to the end of the creation, and wherever we betake ourselves we take with us our source of life. I have suffered much; I have beheld suffering even more. How many unfortunates I have seen die! Alas, they put such a value on life! and I, I have survived them... Perhaps I was indeed less to be pitied; I was more affected by my companions' miseries than by my own; I saw them wholly absorbed in their sorrows; they must have been suffering more than I. I kept telling myself: I am badly off here, but there is a place on the earth where I am happy and peaceable, and I would compensate myself on the shores of lake Geneva for what I was enduring on the Ocean. I have the joy on arrival to see my expectations confirmed, Milord Edward informs me that both of you enjoy peace and health, and that although you, in particular, have lost the sweet name of wife, you still bear those of friend and mother, which surely suffice for your happiness.

I am too eager to send you this Letter to give you at present the detail of my voyage. I dare hope to have soon a more convenient opportunity for

* How happy this Swiss lady is to be merry when she is merry, no wit, no naïveté, no finesse! She has no idea of the precautions that must be taken among us to make good humor work. She does not know that such good humor is not for oneself but for others, and that one does not laugh for the sake of laughter, but of applause.

that. I am content here to give you a mere sketch of it, rather to provoke than to satisfy your curiosity. I have spent nearly four years in the immense circuit I just mentioned, and have returned on the same vessel I left upon, the only one of his squadron that the Commander brought back.

First I saw south America, that vast continent which lack of iron subjected to the Europeans, and which they turned into a wasteland to secure their dominion over it. I saw the coasts of Brazil whence Lisbon and London draw their treasures, and whose miserable peoples tread gold and diamonds under foot without daring to touch them. I peaceably crossed the stormy seas that are below the Antarctic circle; I found in the pacific sea[13] the most frightening tempests:

> *E in mar dubbioso sotto ignoto polo*
> *Provi l'onde fallaci, e' il vento infido.*
>
> Through dangerous seas and under stars unknown,
> Thrall to the faithless waves, and trothless sky.[14]

I saw from afar the land of those supposed giants*[15] who are great only in courage, and whose independence is assured rather by a simple and frugal life than by their tall stature. I sojourned three months in a delightful desert Island, the lovely and moving image of nature's primeval beauty, and which seems to be confined to the ends of the earth to serve there as sanctuary to innocence and persecuted love: but the greedy European obeys his fierce temper by preventing the peaceable Indian from occupying it, and does justice to himself by not occupying it either.[16]

I saw on the shores of Mexico and Peru the same spectacle as in Brazil: I saw their scarce and unfortunate inhabitants, the sorry remnants of two powerful peoples,[17] burdened with fetters, ignominy, and miseries in the midst of their precious metals, reproach Heaven in tears for the treasures it showered upon them. I saw the horrible torching of an entire city without resistance and without defenders.[18] Such is the right of war among the learned, humane, and refined Peoples of Europe. They are not limited to doing as much harm to their enemy as they can profit from; but they count as profit all the harm they can do him gratuitously. I sailed the length of nearly the whole western coast of America; not without being stirred to admiration at seeing fifteen hundred leagues of coast and the largest sea in the world under the dominion of a single power,[19] which holds in its hand so to speak the keys to one Hemisphere of the globe.

After crossing the great sea, I found in the other continent a new spectacle. I saw the most populous and illustrious nation in the Universe sub-

* The Patagonians.

jected to a handful of brigands; I saw this famous people at close hand, and was no longer surprised to find it enslaved.[20] As often conquered as attacked, it was ever a prey to the first comer, and will be so until the end of time. I found it worthy of its fate, lacking even the courage to bemoan it. Learned, craven, hypocritical, and devious; speaking much without saying anything, full of wit without a bit of genius, abounding in signs and sterile in ideas; polite, fawning, clever, sly, and knavish; it places all duties in protocols, all morality in grimaces, and knows no other kindness than salutations and bows. I came upon a second desert Island yet more unknown, more charming than the first, and where the cruellest accident very nearly imprisoned us forever. I was perhaps the only one who was not aghast at so pleasant an exile; am I not henceforth everywhere in exile? I saw in that place of delight and terror what human ingeniousness can attempt in order to draw civilized man out of a seclusion in which he wants for nothing, and plunge him back into an abyss of new needs.

In the vast Ocean where men should find it so pleasant to encounter others, I saw two large vessels pursue, locate, and attack each other, battle furiously, as if that immense space were too small for each of them. I saw them vomit iron and flame at each other. In a rather brief combat I saw the image of hell. I heard the victors' shouts of joy drown out the cries of the wounded and the moans of the dying. I shamefully accepted my share of an immense plunder[21]; I accepted it, but in trust, and if it was taken from wretches, it shall be returned to wretches.

I have seen Europe transported to the tip of Africa, through the ministries of that avaricious, patient, and laborious people who triumphed with time and determination over difficulties that all the heroism of other peoples was never able to overcome.[22] I have seen those vast and unfortunate countries that seem destined only to cover the earth with herds of slaves. At their lowly appearance I turned aside my eyes in contempt, horror, and pity, and seeing the fourth part of my equals turned into beasts for the service of others, I rued being a man.

Finally I have seen in my travelling companions an intrepid and proud people whose example and freedom restores in my eyes the honor of my species, to whom pain and death are nothing, and who fear nothing on earth except hunger and tedium.[23] I have seen in their chief a captain, a soldier, a pilot, a wise man, a great man, and to say even more perhaps, the worthy friend of Edward Bomston: but what I have not seen in the entire world is someone who is like Claire d'Orbe, like Julie d'Étange, and who might console for their loss a heart that once could love them.

How can I discuss my recovery with you? It is from you I must learn

about it. Am I returning freer and wiser than I left? I dare to believe so and cannot so assert. The same image still reigns in my heart; you know whether it is possible for it to fade away; but its empire is more worthy of her; and unless I delude myself it reigns in my unfortunate heart as it does in your own. Yes, my Cousin, it seems to me that her virtue has tamed me, that for her I am merely the best and tenderest friend that ever was, that now I worship her only as you do yourself; or rather, it seems to me that my sentiments are not attenuated but emended, and however closely I examine myself, I find them as pure as the object that inspires them. What more can I say until the test that alone can tell me whether I can be sure of myself? I am sincere and true; I mean to be what I should be; but how can I answer for my heart with so many reasons to have misgivings about it? Am I master of the past? Can I change the fact that a thousand flames once devoured me? How am I by imagination alone to distinguish what is from what was? and how am I to think of her as a friend whom I never saw but as a lover? Whatever you may think, perhaps, of the secret motive for my impatience, it is honest and reasonable, it deserves your approbation. I answer in advance, at least for my intentions. Permit me to see you and examine me for yourself, or let me see Julie and I shall know what I am.

I am to accompany Milord Edward to Italy. I shall pass close by you, and might not see you! Do you think that is imaginable? Ah! If you had the cruelty to insist on it you would deserve not to be obeyed! But why should you insist? Are you not that same Claire, as good and compassionate as virtuous and wise, who saw fit to love me from her tenderest youth, and who must love me much more still, now that I owe her everything.* No, no, dear and charming friend, so unkind a refusal would not be like you nor be fitting for me, it shall not consummate my misery. Once more, once more in my life, I shall lay down my heart at your feet. I shall see you, you will consent to it. I shall see her, she will consent to it. You both know too well my respect for her. You know whether I am one to present myself before her if I thought I were unworthy to appear there. She has so long deplored the effect of her charms, ah let her see for once the effect of her virtue!

P. S. Milord Edward is detained here for some time further by business; if I am allowed to see you, why should I not go on ahead, the sooner to be by your side?

* How is it he owes so much to her who caused his life's unhappiness? Wretched questioner! He owes her the honor, the virtue, the peace of mind of the woman he loves; he owes her everything.

LETTER IV

From Monsieur de Wolmar

Although we are not yet acquainted, I am commissioned to write to you. The most virtuous and most cherished of wives has just bared her heart to her fortunate husband.[24] He believes you were worthy of being loved by her, and he offers you his house. Innocence and peace reign here; here you will find friendship, hospitality, esteem, confidence. Take counsel with your heart, and if you find nothing therein that frightens you, come without fear. You shall not depart from here without leaving behind a friend.

Wolmar.

P. S. Do come, my friend, we eagerly await you. I shall not have the chagrin of seeing you receive a refusal from us.

Julie.

LETTER V

From Madame d'Orbe

And in which the previous one was enclosed

Welcome! A hundred times welcome, dear St. Preux; for I mean for you to keep this name,*[25] at least amongst ourselves. This I think tells you sufficiently that we do not intend to exclude you, unless the exclusion should come from you. When you see from the enclosed Letter that I have done more than you asked, you will learn to have a little more confidence in your friends, and stop blaming their hearts for sorrows they share when reason forces them to inflict some on you.[26] Monsieur de Wolmar wishes to see you, he offers you his house, his friendship, his counsel; less than that was required to assuage all my fears concerning your trip, and I would be insulting myself if I could distrust you for a moment. He goes farther, he means to cure you, and says that neither Julie, nor he, nor you, nor I, can be perfectly happy failing that. Although I expect much from his wisdom and more from your virtue, I do not know how this undertaking will turn out. What I do know is that with the wife he has, the care he wishes to take is a pure act of generosity toward you.

* It is the one she had given him in front of her servants on his previous trip. See part III, letter XIV.

Do come therefore, my gentle friend, in the security of an honest heart and satisfy the eagerness we all have to embrace you and to see you peaceful and contented; come to your country and among your friends to rest from your voyages and forget all the pains you have suffered. The last time you saw me I was a stern matron, and my friend was at death's door; but now that she is in good health and I have become a maiden again, here I am fully as crazy and almost as pretty as I was before my marriage. What in any case is quite certain is that with respect to you I have not changed, and that you would have to make several trips around the world before you found someone who loved you as I do.

LETTER VI

To Milord Edward

I rise in the middle of the night to write to you. I cannot manage to find a moment's rest. My troubled heart, transported, cannot contain itself within me; it needs to pour itself out. You who have so often preserved it from despair, be the worthy recipient of the first pleasures it has tasted for such a long while.

I have beheld her, Milord! my eyes have beheld her! I have heard her voice; her hands have touched mine; she recognized me; she expressed joy in seeing me; she called me her friend, her dear friend; she welcomed me into her house; happier than I have ever been I lodge with her under the same roof, and even now as I write to you, I am thirty steps from her!

My ideas are too rapid to fall into line; they come all at once; they get in each other's way. I am going to pause and recover my breath, to try and put some order into my narrative.[27]

After so long an absence I had no sooner yielded in your presence to my heart's first transports by embracing my friend, my liberator and my father, than you turned your attention to the journey to Italy. You brought me to desire it through the hope of finally relieving the burden of my uselessness to you. Unable to put so quickly an end to the business that detained you in London, you suggested I depart first in order to have more time here awaiting you. I asked permission to come here; I received it, I set forth, and although I was already picturing Julie in prospect, as I was mindful of drawing nearer to her I felt regret at going farther from you. Milord, we are even, that single sentiment has repaid you for everything.

I need not tell you that all along the way I was occupied solely with the object of my journey; but one thing to note is that I began to see from a different angle that same object that had ever remained in my heart. Up

until then I had always remembered Julie shining as before with the charms of her early youth. I had always seen her lovely eyes sparkling with the flame she inspired in me. As I pictured her cherished features I saw nothing but warrants of my happiness; her love and mine were so associated with her face that I could not separate them from it. Now I was to see Julie married, Julie a mother, Julie indifferent! I worried about the changes that eight years' interval could have wrought in her beauty. She had had the smallpox; that had made a difference; how different might she be? My imagination obstinately rejected blotches on that charming face, and the minute I saw one marked with smallpox, it was no longer Julie's. I also thought about the interview we were to have, and in what manner she would greet me. My mind rehearsed this first meeting in a thousand different tableaux, and that moment which was to pass so fleetingly repeated itself a thousand times a day.

When I spied the crest of the mountains my heart pounded in my chest, as I said to myself, she is there. I had just experienced the same thing at sea upon sighting the coasts of Europe. I had earlier experienced the same thing in Meillerie when I spotted the house of the Baron d'Étange. For me the world is never divided into more than two regions, the one where she is, and the one where she is not. The first expands when I go away, and shrinks as I come closer, like a place I am never to reach. At present it is limited to the walls of her room. Alas! that place alone is inhabited; all the rest of creation is empty.

The nearer I got to Switzerland, the more emotion I felt. The instant when from the heights of the Jura I sighted Lake Geneva was an instant of ecstasy and ravishment. The sight of my country, of that country so cherished where torrents of pleasures had flooded my heart; the air of the Alps so wholesome and pure; the sweet air of the fatherland, more fragrant than the perfumes of the Orient; that rich and fertile land, that unique countryside, the most beautiful that ever met human eye; that charming abode like nothing I had found in circling the earth; the sight of a happy and free people; the mildness of the season, the calmness of the Clime; a thousand delightful memories that reawakened all the sentiments I had tasted; all these things threw me into transports I cannot describe, and seemed to restore to me all at once the enjoyment of my entire life.

Coming down toward the coast,[28] I felt a new impression I had no notion of. It was a certain movement of dread which gripped my heart and troubled me in spite of myself. That dread, stemming from a cause I could not discern, grew as I came nearer to the city; it slowed down my eagerness to arrive, and ultimately became so pronounced that I worried as much over my haste as I had up to then over my slowness. Upon entering

Vevey the sensation I felt was anything but agreeable. I was seized with a violent palpitation that impeded my breathing; I spoke with a broken and trembling voice. I had difficulty making myself heard when I asked for Monsieur de Wolmar; for I dared not name his wife. I was told he lived at Clarens. This news lifted a weight of five hundred pounds from my chest, and considering the two leagues I still had to travel as a respite, I rejoiced at what would have dismayed me at another time; but I was truly sorry to learn that Madame d'Orbe was in Lausanne. I entered an inn to restore the strength that was failing me: I was unable to swallow a single morsel; I choked when I drank and could empty a glass only in successive sips. My terror increased when I saw the horses being hitched to set forth again. I think I would have given anything on earth to see a wheel break along the way. I no longer saw Julie; my troubled imagination allowed me to see nothing but blurry objects; my soul was in total tumult. I was familiar with pain and despair; I would have preferred them to this horrible condition. I think I can even say that I never in my life experienced more cruel restlessness than I found myself in during this short trip, and I am convinced that I could not have borne it for a full day.

On arrival, I had the coachman stop at the gate, and feeling unable to take a single step, I had him say that a stranger wanted to speak with Monsieur de Wolmar. He was out walking with his wife. They were summoned, and came up on another side, while I, my eyes fixed on the avenue, waited on tenterhooks to see someone show up there.

No sooner had Julie laid eyes on me than she recognized me. Instantly, seeing me, exclaiming, running, throwing herself into my arms was for her a single act. At the sound of that voice I felt a start; I wheeled about, saw her, felt her. O Milord! O my friend!.... I was unable to speak.... Farewell fear, farewell fright, dread, propriety. Her look, her exclamation, her gesture, restored my confidence, courage, and strength in a moment. In her arms I drew warmth and life; I tingled with joy pressing her in mine. A sacred transport kept us tightly embraced in a long silence, and it was only after such a pleasant shock that our voices started to speak at once, and our eyes to mingle their tears. Monsieur de Wolmar was there; I knew it, I saw him; but what could I have seen? No, had all creation joined together against me, had I been surrounded by instruments of torture, I would not have refused my heart the least of her caresses, the tender firstfruits of a pure and holy friendship we will bear with us to Heaven!

Once this initial impetuous movement abated, Madame de Wolmar took me by the hand, and turning toward her husband, said to him with a certain grace of innocence and candor which I deeply felt: although he is my old friend, I do not introduce him to you, I receive him from you, and

7. The confidence of beautiful souls.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

it is only honored with your friendship that he henceforth shall have mine.[29] Though new friends have less ardor than old ones, he said as he embraced me, they will become old ones in their turn, and will not suffer by comparison with the others. I received his embraces; but my heart had just emptied itself, and I did no more than receive them.

After this brief scene, I observed out of the corner of my eye that they had taken down my trunk and garaged my chaise.[30] Julie took my arm, and I walked with them toward the house, all but oppressed with delight to see how they were taking possession of me.

It was then that studying more tranquilly that adored face which I expected to find disfigured, I perceived with bittersweet surprise that she was really more beautiful and more dazzling than ever. Her charming features have become more pronounced; she has acquired a somewhat fuller figure, which only adds to her shimmering fair complexion.[31] The smallpox has left on her cheeks only a few slight, almost imperceptible traces. Instead of that baleful modesty that used to make her constantly lower her eyes, her chaste way of looking at you bespeaks the assurance of virtue joined with meekness and sensibility; her carriage is less timid yet no less unassuming; a freer allure and easier graces have taken the place of those constrained manners mixed with tenderness and shame; and whereas then the sentiment of her fault used to make her more affecting, today her sense of purity makes her more celestial.

We had scarcely entered the salon when she disappeared, and returned a moment later. She was not alone. Who do you think she brought with her? Milord, it was her children! Her two children who were fairer than fair, and already bearing on their childish physiognomy the charm and attractiveness of their mother. What became of me at this sight? That can be neither said nor conceived; it must be felt. A thousand conflicting impulses beset me all at once. A thousand cruel and delightful memories came up to divide my heart. O spectacle! O regrets! I felt myself torn with pain and transported with joy. I was, so to speak, seeing her whom I so cherished multiplied. Alas! I was seeing at the same instant the only too vivid proof that she was nothing more to me, and my losses seemed to be multiplied with her.

She led them to me by the hand. Look, she said in a voice that pierced my soul, here are your friend's[32] children; they will be your friends one day. Be theirs as of today. The two little creatures immediately pressed round me, took hold of my hands, and by showering me with naive caresses deflected all my emotion toward tenderness. I took the two of them into my arms, and pressing them to my troubled heart: dear, lovable children, I

said with a sigh, you have a great task to accomplish. May you be like those who gave you life; may you emulate their virtues, and by means of your own offer consolation to their unfortunate friends some day. Madame de Wolmar, delighted, leapt to hug me again and seemed to wish to repay the caresses I was bestowing on her two sons. But what a difference from the first embrace to that one! I felt that with surprise. It was a materfamilias I was embracing; I saw her surrounded by her Husband and children; this awed me. I saw in her a dignified mien that had not struck me at first; I felt obliged to have a new sort of respect for her; her familiarity was almost a burden; as beautiful as she seemed to me I would have kissed the hem of her dress more willingly than her cheek. From that instant, in a word, I knew that neither she nor I were the same, and I began in earnest to augur well for myself.

Taking me by the hand Monsieur de Wolmar then led me to the lodging that was reserved for me. Here, he said as we entered, is your apartment; it is not some stranger's, it will no longer be anyone else's, and from now on you will occupy or it will remain empty. Imagine how this compliment pleased me! But I did not yet deserve it sufficiently to hear it without embarrassment. Monsieur de Wolmar spared me the dilemma of a response. He invited me to take a turn around the garden. There he found a way to put me more at ease, and adopting the tone of a man informed of my former errors, but full of confidence in my uprightness, he spoke to me as a father to his child, and by showing esteem for me rendered me incapable of belying it. No, Milord, he was not mistaken; I shall not forget that I have his esteem and yours to justify. But why must my heart cringe at his favors? Why does a man I must like have to be the husband of Julie?

This day seemed destined to bring every kind of ordeal I could undergo. When we had returned to Madame de Wolmar, her husband was called away for some instructions to be given, and I remained alone with her.

Then I found myself in a new quandary, the most painful and least foreseen of all. What to say to her? How to begin? Would I dare recall our former relationship, and times so present in my memory? Would I let it be thought that I had forgotten them or no longer cared about them? What torture to treat as a stranger the woman one holds deep in his heart! What infamy to take advantage of hospitality to speak to her of things she must no longer hear! Amidst these perplexities I completely lost countenance; fire flushed my face; I dared neither speak, nor raise my eyes, nor make the least gesture, and I think I would have remained in that violent state until her husband's return, if she had not rescued me from it. For her part, it did not seem that this moment alone together had in any way embarrassed

her. She preserved the same demeanor and the same manners she had before; she continued to speak to me in the same sort of way; except that I thought I noticed that she tried to put into it even more gaiety and simplicity, combined with a look, neither timid nor tender, but gentle and affectionate, as if to encourage me to take assurance and surmount a constraint she could not fail to perceive.

She spoke to me of my long voyages: she wanted to hear all about them; especially about the dangers I had run, the sufferings I had endured; for she was not unaware, she said, that her friendship owed me compensation for them. Ah Julie! said I to her sadly, I have been with you but a moment; do you already want to send me back to the Indies? Not at all, said she laughing, but I want to go there myself.

I told her I had given you a relation of my voyage, a copy of which I was bringing her. Then she asked me eagerly for news of you. I spoke to her of you, and could not do so without retracing the pains I had suffered and those I had caused you. She was touched by them; she began in a more serious tone to undertake her own justification, and show me that she had had to do all that she had done. Monsieur de Wolmar returned in the middle of her explanation, and I was dumbfounded when she went on with it in his presence exactly as if he had not been there. He could not keep from smiling when he discerned my astonishment. When she had finished, he said to me: you are seeing an example of the candor that reigns here. If you sincerely wish to be virtuous, learn to imitate it: that is the only request and the only lesson I have to give you. The first step toward vice is to go about innocent actions in a mysterious manner, and whoever likes secrecy sooner or later has reason to be secretive. A single precept of morality can do for all the others; it is this: Never do nor say anything that thou dost not wish everyone to see and hear[33]; and for my part, I have always regarded as the worthiest of men that Roman who wanted his house to be built in such a way that whatever occurred within could be seen.[34]

I have, he continued, two options to propose to you. Choose freely which suits you best; but choose one or the other. Then taking his wife's hand and mine, he said to me as he clasped it: our friendship is beginning, its dear link is here, may it be indissoluble. Embrace your sister and friend; treat her always as such; the more familiarly you act with her, the better I will think of you. But behave when you are alone with her as if I were present, or in front of me as if I were not; that is all I ask of you. If you prefer this latter option, you may do so without misgivings; for since I reserve the right to alert you to anything that displeases me, so long as I say nothing, you will be certain you have not displeased me.

Two hours earlier such a speech would have greatly embarrassed me; but Monsieur de Wolmar was beginning to assume such great authority over me that I was already nearly accustomed to it. We began conversing again peaceably the three of us, and each time I spoke to Julie, I did not fail to call her *Madame*. Tell me truthfully, her husband finally said interrupting me; in your interview of a little while ago did you say *Madame*? No, I said a bit disconcerted: but decorum... Decorum, he retorted, is merely the mask of vice; where virtue reigns, it is useless; I want none of it. Call my wife *Julie* in my presence, or *Madame* alone with her; to me it is all the same. I began then to know what kind of man I was dealing with, and I firmly resolved to keep my heart always in a condition fit for him to see it.

My body drained with fatigue was in great need of food, and my spirit of rest; I found both at table. After too many years of absence and grief, after such long voyages, I said to myself in a sort of rapture, I am with Julie, I behold her, I speak with her; I am at table with her, she sees me without misgivings, she receives me without fear; nothing troubles the pleasure we have in being together. Sweet and precious innocence, I had not tasted thy charms, and it is only as of today that I am beginning to exist without suffering!

That evening as I was retiring I passed in front of the masters' bedroom; I saw them enter it together; I went sadly to mine, and that moment was not for me the day's most pleasant.

Such is, Milord, the way this first interview went, this interview so passionately desired, and so cruelly dreaded. I have been trying to collect my thoughts since I have been alone; I have endeavored to probe my heart; but the turmoil of the preceding day still lingers on, and it is impossible for me to judge my real condition so early. All I know very certainly is that if my sentiments for her have not changed in kind, they have at least surely changed in form, that I crave a third party always between us, and fear being alone with her as much as I formerly desired it.

I intend to go in two or three days to Lausanne. I have still only half seen Julie so long as I have not seen her Cousin; that amiable and dear friend to whom I owe so much, who will forever share with you my friendship, my attentions, my gratitude, and all the sentiments of which my heart is still master. Upon my return I shall lose no time in telling you more. I am in need of your advice and wish to keep a close watch on myself. I know my duty and will fulfill it. However pleasant it is to dwell in this house, I have resolved this, I swear: if I ever perceive that I am having too good a time here, I shall leave instantly.

LETTER VII

From Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe

If you had granted us the delay we were asking of you, you would have had the pleasure of embracing your protégé before your departure. He arrived day before yesterday and meant to go see you today; but a sort of lumbago, the result of fatigue and the journey, keeps him in his room, and he has been bled* this morning. Moreover, I had firmly resolved, to punish you, not to let him leave so soon, and you have to come see him here, or I promise you that you shall not see him for a long while. Would it not be truly novel for him to see the inseparables separately!

In truth, my Cousin, I know not what vain terrors had obsessed my mind over this trip, and I am ashamed to have opposed it with such obstinacy. The more I dreaded seeing him again, the more I would be sorry today not to have seen him; for his presence has put an end to the fears that still bothered me, and that could have become justifiable by dint of my thinking about him. Far from being intimidated by the attachment I feel for him, I think that if I cherished him less I would be more mistrustful of myself; but I love him as tenderly as ever, without loving him in the same manner. It is from comparing what I feel in seeing him with what I once felt that I derive the security of my present state, and with such dissimilar sentiments one feels the difference in proportion to their intensity.

As for him, although I recognized him from the first instant, I have found him greatly changed, and, something I would formerly have scarcely imagined possible, in many respects he seems to me changed for the better. The first day, he showed some signs of embarrassment, and I myself had great difficulty hiding my own. But he was not long in adopting the firm voice and open demeanor that befits his character. I had always seen him timid and nervous; the fear of displeasing me, and perhaps the secret shame of a role little worthy of an honorable man, lent him in my presence a certain servile and base countenance which you more than once rightly mocked. Instead of a slave's submissiveness, he now has the respectfulness of a friend who knows how to honor what he esteems, he speaks honest thoughts with assurance; he has no fear that his maxims of virtue will go against his interests; he fears neither injustice to himself nor affront to me in praising praiseworthy things, and one can sense in everything he says the confidence of a righteous man who is sure of himself, who draws from his own heart the approbation he used to seek only in my eyes. I find also

* Why bled? Is that the fashion in Switzerland as well?

that worldly wisdom and experience have taken away that dogmatic and peremptory tone which is learned in the study, that he is less hasty to judge men since he has observed many, less eager to posit universal propositions since he has seen so many exceptions, and that in general the love of truth has cured him of being doctrinaire[35]; so it is that he has become less brilliant and more reasonable, and one learns much more from him now that he is not so learned.

His appearance too has changed and is not less appealing; his gait is more confident; his countenance is more open; his carriage is more proud, he has brought back from his campaigns a certain martial air that becomes him all the more, in that his gesture, lively and quick when he heats up, is otherwise more grave and more deliberate than before. He is a sailor whose attitude is phlegmatic and cold, and whose speech is ebullient and impetuous. At thirty years of age, his visage is that of a man in his prime and joins with the fire of youth the majesty of maturity. His complexion is unrecognizable; he is black as a Moor, and moreover much scarred by smallpox. My dear, I must tell you all: these scars pain me some to look at, and I often catch myself looking at them in spite of myself.

It occurs to me that while I am studying him, he is no less attentive to studying me. After such a long absence, it is natural to look each other over with a sort of curiosity; but if this curiosity seems related to the earlier keenness, what a difference in manner as well as motive! Though our eyes meet less often, we look at each other more freely. It is as if we had a tacit convention to contemplate each other by turns. Each one senses, so to speak, when it is the other's turn and averts his eyes in turn. Can one without pleasure behold anew, even though there is no more emotion involved, him one formerly loved so tenderly, and loves so purely today? Who knows whether †pride is not seeking to justify errors past? Who knows whether each of us when no longer blinded by passion does not still like to think inwardly: I had not chosen so badly? However that may be, I repeat it to you shamelessly, I still have very tender sentiments for him that will last as long as I live. Far from reproaching myself for these sentiments, I congratulate myself for them; I would be as ashamed of not feeling them, as of a character vice or the proof of a wicked heart. As for him, I venture to believe that, except for virtue, I am what he loves most on earth. I can tell that he takes pride in my esteem; I in turn take pride in his and shall deserve to keep it. Ah! if you could see the tenderness with which he caresses my children, if you knew the pleasure he takes in speaking of you; Cousin, you would recognize that I am still dear to him!

What reinforces my confidence in the opinion we both have of him is that Monsieur de Wolmar shares it, and that he thinks of him indepen-

dently now that he has seen him all the good things we had said of him. He has spoken to me a lot about him these two evenings, congratulating himself on the decision he has reached and giving me grief for my resistance. No, he said to me yesterday, we shall not leave such an honorable man in doubt about himself; we shall teach him to rely more on his virtue, and perhaps one day we shall enjoy with more advantage than you think the fruit of the attentions we are undertaking. As for now, I can already tell you that his character pleases me, and I have high regard for him above all for something he hardly suspects, that is to say his coolness with regard to me. The less friendship he manifests to me, the more he inspires in me; I can hardly tell you how I dreaded his blandishments. That was the first test I had in store for him; a second will come along*[36] on which occasion I shall observe him; after which I shall observe him no longer. As far as this one is concerned, I said to him, it proves nothing more than his frankness of character: for never formerly could he bring himself to assume a submissive and accommodating air with my father, although he knew it was much in his interest to do so and I had earnestly begged him to. It grieved me to see him relinquish this unique resource yet I could not resent his inability to be false in any way. The case is quite different, my husband replied; between your father and him there is a natural antipathy based on their contrary maxims. As for me who have neither systems nor prejudices, I am sure that he does not hate me naturally. No man hates me; a passionless man can inspire aversion in no one. But I have robbed him of his property, he will not so soon forgive me. He will only love me the more tenderly for it, once he is perfectly convinced that the harm I have done him does not prevent my looking on him favorably. If he flattered me at this point he would be a knave; if he never did he would be a monster.

This, my Claire, is where we are now, and I am beginning to believe that Heaven will bless the uprightness of our hearts and my husband's benevolent intentions. But it is too good of me to go into all this detail: you do not deserve my taking such pleasure in conversing with you; I have resolved to tell you nothing more, and if you wish to know more about it, come and find out.

P. S. Yet I must also tell you about what has just taken place with respect to this letter. You know the indulgence with which Monsieur de Wolmar received the belated confession that this unforeseen return forced me to make to him. You saw with what gentle art he dried my tears and dispelled my shame. Either because I had told him nothing new, as you

* The Letter that treated of this second test has been suppressed; but I shall take care to bring it up it at the proper time.

have quite reasonably conjectured, or because he was indeed moved by an action that could only have been dictated by repentance; not only did he continue to keep my company as before, but he seems to have multiplied his attentions, his confidence, his esteem, and to be trying to compensate me by dint of consideration for the mortification this confession cost me. My Cousin, you know my heart; judge for yourself the impression such conduct makes on it!

As soon as I saw he was resolved to let our former master come, I resolved on my part to take against myself the best precaution I could invoke; it was to elect my husband himself as confidant, to hold no private interview that would not be reported to him, and to write no letter that he would not be shown. I even obliged myself to write each Letter as if he were not to see it, and then to show it to him. You will find an item in this one that came about in this manner, and although I could not prevent myself, when writing it, from being aware that he would see it, I bear myself witness that this did not lead me to change a word of it; but when I went to give him my letter he scoffed at me, and refused to indulge me by reading it.

I confess that I was a bit put out by this refusal, as if he had doubts about my good faith. This reaction did not escape him: the most forthright and generous of men soon reassured me. Admit, he said to me, that in this Letter you have discussed me less than usual. I conceded that; was it proper for me to discuss him a great deal so as to show him what I would have said about him? Well, he replied with a smile, I would rather you discuss me more and not know what you will say about me. Then he continued in a more serious tone: marriage is too austere and too solemn an institution to brook all the heart's petty secrets that tender friendship admits of. This latter tie sometimes appropriately tempers the extreme formality of the former, and it is good that an honest and proper wife be able to seek from a faithful friend the consolations, enlightenment, and counsel she would not dare ask of her husband on certain matters. Although you never say anything between you that you would not like to inform me of, take care not to make a rule of it, lest such duty become a constraint, and expressing your intimate thoughts be less easy as the audience for them is extended. Believe me, the presence of any witness at all holds back the outpourings of friendship. There are a thousand secrets that three friends need to know and can only tell each other by twos. You indeed convey the same things to your friend and to your husband, but not in the same manner; and if you insist on lumping everything together, it will come to pass that your Letters will be written more for me than for her, and you will feel comfortable with neither the one nor the other. It is in my interest as much

as yours that I speak to you thus. Do you not see that you already fear the rightful embarrassment of praising me in my presence? Why would you want to deprive yourself of the pleasure of telling your friend how dear your husband is to you, and me of the pleasure of thinking that in your most intimate discussions you like to speak well of him. Julie! Julie! he added pressing my hand, and looking at me kindly; will you lower yourself to precautions so unworthy of who you are, and will you never learn to appreciate your own true worth?

My dear friend, I would be hard pressed to explain how that incomparable man does it; but I can no longer feel ashamed in his presence. In spite of me, he raises me higher than myself, and I feel that by giving me confidence he is teaching me to deserve it.

LETTER VIII

Reply

How now, Cousin! our traveller has arrived, and I have not yet seen him at my feet bearing America's spoils? It is not him, I warn you, I blame for this delay; for I know that he finds it as long as I do: but I see he has not forgotten as thoroughly as you say his former occupation as a slave, and I am complaining less of his neglect than of your tyranny. I also think it is too good of you to want a solemn and formalistic prude like myself to make the advances, and bringing a stop to all my business, rush over to kiss a black[37] and pocky*[38] face that has four times passed under the sun[39] and seen the land of spices! But you make me laugh especially when you hasten to chide lest I chide first. I should like to know what you think you are up to? Scolding is my trade; it gives me pleasure, I do marvelously at it, and that suits me perfectly: you on the contrary are impossibly awkward at it, and it is not for you at all. On the other hand, if you knew how gracefully you can be in the wrong, what charm your apologetic look and pleading eye lend you, instead of chiding you would spend your life begging forgiveness, if not out of duty, at least out of coquetry.

For the present, beg my forgiveness in any case. The pleasant proposition to elect one's own husband as confidant, and what an obliging precaution for a friendship as hallowed as ours! Unfair friend, and faint-hearted wife! to whom on earth can you entrust your virtue, if you mistrust your own sentiments and mine? Can you, without offending both of us, fear your heart and my indulgence given the sacred union in which you

* Scarred by the smallpox. A local expression.

live? It is hard for me to understand how the very idea of admitting a third party to the private prattle of two women failed to revolt you! For my part, I am very happy to babble at leisure with you; but if I knew that a man's eye had ever pried about in my letters, I would take no further pleasure in writing to you; little by little coolness would insert itself between us together with reserve, and we would no longer love each other except as any other two women. Just think what your stupid mistrust exposed us to, if your husband had not been wiser than you.

He acted most prudently in not wishing to read your Letter. He would, perhaps, have been less pleased with it than you hoped, and less than I am myself, I who from the condition in which I have seen you know better how to assess the one in which I see you now. All those contemplative sages who have spent their lives studying the human heart know less about the true signs of love than the dullest of sensible women. Monsieur de Wolmar would have noticed at once that your entire Letter is devoted to discussing our friend, and would not have seen the appendix where you don't so much as mention him. If you had written that appendix ten years ago, my child, I do not know how you would have managed it, but the friend would always have managed to sneak back into it somehow, all the more so since the husband was not going to see it.

Monsieur de Wolmar would further have observed the attention you brought to studying his guest, and the pleasure you derive from describing him; but he could devour Aristotle and Plato without ever learning that one gazes at one's lover and does not study him. Any study requires a detachment one never has while beholding one's beloved.[40]

Finally he would imagine that all these changes you have observed would have gone unnoticed by another woman, and I on the contrary very much fear to find some that went unnoticed by you. However different your guest may be from what he was, he would change still more, although had your heart not changed you would still see him as the same.[41] Be that as it may, you avert your eyes when he looks at you; that is another very good sign. You avert them, Cousin? So you no longer lower them? For surely you did not mistake one word for the other. Do you think our sage would have noticed that also?

Another thing quite likely to worry a Husband, is a lingering hint of something touching and affectionate in your language treating of the one you cherished. Reading you, hearing you speak one needs to know you well in order not to mistake your sentiments; one needs to know that you are speaking of a friend only, or that you speak thus of all your friends; but with respect to that, it is a natural effect of your character, which your husband knows too well to take alarm at. And how in so tender a heart could

pure friendship fail to sound still a bit like love? Listen, Cousin, everything I am saying to you here ought indeed to give you courage, but certainly not audacity. Your progress is noticeable and that is something. I relied only on your virtue, and I am beginning to rely also on your reason: I now consider your recovery if not accomplished, at least auspicious, and you have accomplished precisely enough of it to be inexcusable if you do not complete it.

Before coming to your appendix I had already noticed the little item you were candid enough not to suppress or modify mindful that your husband would see it. I am sure that in reading it he would if it were possible have thought even more highly of you; but that would not have made him more pleased with the item. On the whole, your Letter was quite apt to inspire in him considerable confidence in your behavior and considerable anxiety about your inclinations. I confess that these pocks that you so gaze at frighten me, and never did love conceive such a dangerous cosmetic. I know this would mean nothing to another woman; but, Cousin, always remember, she whom a lover's youth and good looks had not been able to seduce was undone when she thought about the pains he had suffered for her. Heaven no doubt meant for him to retain some marks of the disease to exercise your virtue, and for you to retain none, to exercise his.

I return to the principal subject of your letter; you know that on receiving our friend's letter, I flew; the case was serious. But now if you knew in what difficulties this short absence has placed me and how many affairs I have on my hands at the same time, you would sense the impossibility of absenting myself from the house a second time without encumbering myself further here and placing myself in the necessity of staying even through the winter; which is neither in my interest nor in yours. Is it not better for us to forego seeing each other hurriedly for two or three days, and have our reunion six months earlier? I also think it will not be without usefulness for me to have a fairly leisurely talk alone with our philosopher; whether to sound out and brace his heart; or to give him some useful counsel on the manner of his conduct with your husband and even with you; for I do not imagine that you could speak very freely with him on that head, and I see from your letter itself that he wants counsel. We have so long been accustomed to governing him that we are somewhat answerable for him to our own conscience, and until his reason is entirely free, we must make up for it. For my part, that is an attention I shall always assume with pleasure; for he has shown costly deference for my advice which I shall never forget, and there is no man on earth, since my own is no more, whom I esteem and love as much as him. I am also reserving for him in return the pleasure of performing a few services here for me. I have many pa-

pers in disorder which he will help me sort out, and a few thorny affairs for which I in turn shall need his lights and attentions. Moreover, I expect to keep him only five or six days at the very most, and perhaps I will send him back to you the very next day; for I have too much vanity to wait until he is taken with impatience to go back, and too sharp an eye to make a mistake about it.

Do not fail therefore, as soon as he is recovered, to send him to me, that is to say, to let him come, or it will be no laughing matter. You well know that if I laugh when I weep and am not grieving any the less for that, I also laugh when I scold and am not any the less angry. If you are very good, and do everything without complaining, I promise to send back with him a pretty little present that will give you pleasure and a great pleasure indeed; but if you keep me waiting, I warn you that you shall have nothing.

P. S. By the way, tell me: does our sailor smoke? does he curse? does he drink spirits? Does he carry a big sabre? does he look just like a pirate? My, how curious I am to see what one looks like upon returning from the Antipodes!

LETTER IX

From Claire to Julie

Here's your Slave, Cousin, I am sending him back to you. I have made him mine this whole week long, and he has borne his chains so contentedly that one can see he is just made for service. Thank me for not keeping him a week more; for, no offense intended, if I had waited until he was on the point of being bored with me, I might not have sent him back so soon. So I have kept him without scruple; but I did have one against daring to lodge him in my house.[42] I have sometimes felt in myself that pride of soul which disdains rigid proprieties and becomes virtue so well. I have been more timid on this occasion without knowing why; and the only sure thing is that I would be more inclined to reproach than to congratulate myself for such reserve.

But do you know why our friend bode his time so peacefully here? First, he was with me, and I maintain that this is reason aplenty for biding his time. He spared me headaches and was helpful to me in my affairs; a friend never tires of that. A third thing that you have already guessed, although you do not let on, is that he was talking to me about you, and if we subtracted the time taken up by that topic from the time he spent here, you would see that there has been very little left over for me personally.

But what an odd notion for him to have left you behind for the pleasure of talking about you? Not so odd as one would think. He is uneasy in your presence; he must keep incessant watch on himself; the least indiscretion would become a crime, and in these dangerous moments honest hearts listen to duty alone: but far from the person once cherished, one allows oneself to be mindful of her still. Though one stifles a sentiment that has become blameworthy, why should one feel badly about having had it while it was not? Can the sweet memory of a happiness that was once permissible ever become criminal? That is, I think, a reasoning that would ill befit you, but that he after all can allow himself. He began to run through again, so to speak, the course of his bygone love. His early youth flowed past a second time in our conversations. He confided everything to me all over again; he recalled those happy times when it was all right for him to love you; he described for my heart the charms of an innocent flame..... no doubt, he embellished them!

He said little to me about his present state with respect to you, and what he did say is closer to respect and admiration than to love; so that he seems to me to be returning much more secure about the state of his heart than when he arrived. Not that one does not detect in the depths of his too-sensible heart, the minute the subject turns to you, a certain emotion that mere friendship, no less touching, nonetheless indicates in a different tone; but I have long since remarked that no one can either behold you or think of you dispassionately, and if to the universal sentiment the sight of you inspires is added the more tender sentiment that an indelible memory must have left him, it will be found that it is difficult and perhaps impossible for him even with the most austere virtue to be other than what he is. I have questioned him, observed him, followed him thoroughly; I have examined him to the extent I could; I cannot well read what is in his soul, he does not read it any better himself: but I can vouch at least that he is convinced of the force of his duties and yours, and that to conceive the idea of a contemptible and corrupted Julie would horrify him more than that of his own destruction. Cousin, I have but one piece of advice for you, and beg you to mark it well: avoid particulars about the past and I shall answer for your future.

As for the restitution you mention, you must put it out of mind. After exhausting all the imaginable reasons, I begged, pressed, implored, shunned, kissed him, I took his two hands in mine, I would have fallen to my knees if he had let me; he did not so much as listen. He carried ill humor and obstinacy to the point of swearing that he would sooner consent never to see you again than surrender your portrait. Finally having in a burst of indignation placed my hand where he wore it next to his heart,

there it is, he said in a voice so emotional that he could hardly breathe, there is the portrait, my last remaining possession, and you begrudge me even that. Be sure that it will never be torn from me but with my life. Take my word for it, Cousin, let's be reasonable and leave him the portrait. What does it ultimately matter to you if stays with him? Too bad for him if he insists on keeping it.

After having thoroughly unburdened and relieved his heart, he seemed tranquil enough for me to broach matters concerning him. I found that time and reason had not made him change his system, and that he limited his ambition entirely to spending his life attached to Milord Edward. I could but approve a proposal so gracious, so in keeping with his character, and so worthy of the gratitude he owes to unexampled kindnesses. He told me you had been of the same mind; but that Monsieur de Wolmar kept his silence. An idea occurs to me. Based on your husband's rather singular conduct, and other indices, I suspect he has some secret design on our friend that he is not saying. Let us leave it to him and trust his wisdom. His manner of going about it is proof enough that if my hunch is correct, he is contemplating nothing but that is advantageous to the person of whom he is taking such good care.

You described his appearance and manners not badly, and it is a rather favorable sign for you to have observed him more exactly than I would have thought: but do you not find that his long sufferings and the habit of bearing them have made his physiognomy even more interesting than it was before? Despite what you had told me about him in your letter, I feared I would find in him that mannered politeness, those apish ways one never fails to contract in Paris, and which, amidst the multitude of nothings with which an idle day is filled, make a point of assuming one form rather than another. Whether because this veneer does not take with certain souls, or because the sea air has completely removed it, I have not detected the least trace of it; and in all the solicitude he demonstrated to me, I saw nothing more than the desire to content his heart. He spoke to me about my poor husband; but he preferred mourning him with me to comforting me, and recited me no courtly maxims on that head. He caressed my daughter, but instead of sharing my admiration for her, he reproached me like you for her shortcomings and complained that I spoiled her; he devoted himself zealously to my business, and was of my opinion in almost nothing. Moreover the wind would have sucked my eyes out before he would think of getting up to close a curtain; I would have tired myself out passing from one room to the next before a tail of his coat gallantly extended on his hand would come to my rescue; yesterday my fan lay a full second on the floor without his bounding from the other end of the room

as if to save it from the fire. In the mornings before coming to see me, he did not a single time send for news of me. When he goes walking he does not make a point of having his hat glued to his head, to show that he knows what is fashionable.*[43] At table, I have often asked him for his snuffbox which he does not call his box[44]; he always presented it to me with his hand, never on a plate as a lackey would; he did not fail to drink to my health at least twice at each meal, and I wager that were he to stay with us through the winter, we would see him, seated with us around the fire, warm himself like an old bourgeois.[45] You laugh, Cousin; but show me one of our own freshly arrived from Paris who has preserved this gentle simplicity. Besides, it seems to me that you must find our philosopher worse than he was on one single point; which is that he pays a bit more attention to those who are speaking to him, which can happen only at your prejudice, yet without going so far, I think, as to reconcile him with Madame Belon.[46] For my part, I find him improved in that he is more solemn and earnest than ever. My darling, keep him carefully for me until my arrival. He is precisely as I need him, for the pleasure of harassing him from morning to night.

Admire my discretion; I have told you nothing yet of the present I am sending you, and which promises you another one soon: but you have received it before opening my Letter, and you who know how much I worship it and how right I am to do so; you, who so eagerly craved this present,[47] will concede that I deliver more than I had promised. Ah, the poor little girl! at the moment you read this, she is already in your arms; she is happier than her mother; but in two months I shall be happier than she; for I shall feel my happiness more. Alas! dear Cousin, do you not already possess me entire? where you are, where my daughter is, what is yet wanting of me? There she is, this lovable child; receive her as your own; I yield her, I give her to you; I resign my maternal authority into your hands; correct my mistakes, take upon yourself the cares of which as you see it I acquit myself so ill; be as of today the mother of your Daughter-in-law to be, and to endear her still further to me, make her if that is possible into another Julie. Her face already resembles yours; from her humor, I foresee that she will be solemn and preacherly; once you have corrected the tantrums I am accused of having fostered, you will see my daughter giving herself airs of being my Cousin; but happier, she will have fewer tears to shed and fewer battles to wage. If Heaven had preserved her excellent fa-

* In Paris they make a point above all of making company comfortable and easy, and they make this ease consist in a multitude of rules of this magnitude. Everything in high society is custom and law. All these customs appear and disappear like a flash. Good form consists of being always on the alert, latching onto them as they pass, affecting them, and showing that one is up on the current one. All that for the sake of simplicity.

ther, how far from him it would have been to curb her inclinations, and how far from us it will be to do so ourselves! How lovely for me to see them already falling into line with our designs! Do you realize she already cannot get along with out her little hubby[48] and it is in part for this reason that I send her back to you? Yesterday I had a conversation with her that made our friend die laughing. First of all, she has not the least regret in leaving me, I who am all day long her very humble servant, and cannot refuse her anything she wants; and you whom she fears and who tell her, no, twenty times a day, you are the Petite-Maman[49] in spades, whose company one seeks eagerly, and whose refusals are preferred to all my bonbons. When I apprised her that I was sending her to you, she went into transports you can imagine; but to confound her, I added that you would send me in her stead the little hubby, and that made it seem much less appealing. She asked me nonplussed what I meant to do with him. I answered that I wanted to make him my own; she pouted. Henriette, do you not want to cede him to me, your little hubby? No, she said rather crossly. No? But what if I do not want to cede him to you either, who shall reconcile us? Maman, it will be Petite-Maman. Then I shall have the preference, for you know she wants whatever I do. Oh Petite-Maman never wishes for anything but reason! How now, Mademoiselle, isn't that the same thing? The sly thing began to smile. But really, I went on, for what reason wouldn't she give me the little hubby? Because he isn't right for you. And why shouldn't he be right for me? Another smile as wily as the first. Speak frankly, do you think I am too old for him? No, Maman; but he is too young for you.... Cousin, a child of seven!..... In truth, if at this I did not lose my head over her, I would have to have already lost it.

I amused myself by provoking her further. My dear Henriette, I said to her, getting serious, I assure you he isn't right for you either. Why is that? she cried with an air of alarm. Because he is too harebrained for you. Oh Maman, is that all? I shall tame him. And supposing he by ill chance made you crazy? Ah, my good Maman, how I should like to be like you! Be like me! you whippersnapper? Yes, Maman, you keep saying all day long that you are crazy about me. Well, I shall be crazy about him: that's all.

I know you do not approve of this pretty prattle, and will soon be in a position to restrict it. Neither do I mean to justify it even though it enchants me, but merely to show you that your daughter already loves her little hubby, and that although he is a couple of years younger than she, she will not be unworthy of the authority that her seniority entitles her to. I see, moreover, from the contrast of your example and mine with that of your poor mother, that when the wife governs, the household is not the worse off. Farewell, my beloved; farewell my dear inseparable; trust that the time approaches, and that the grape harvest will not take place without me.

LETTER X
To Milord Edward

What pleasures learnt too late have I enjoyed these past three weeks! How sweet to while one's days in the bosom of a tranquil friendship, safe from the storm of impetuous passions! Milord, what a lovely and moving spectacle is a simple and well-regulated house where order, peace, and innocence reign; where is assembled without pretention, without ostentation, everything that corresponds to man's veritable destination! The countryside, the seclusion, the repose, the season, the vast expanse of water spread out before me, the mountains' rugged look, everything here reminds me of my delightful island of Tinian.[50] It seems to me I am witnessing the realization of the fervid wishes I entertained so many times there. Here I lead a life to my liking, here I find a society after my heart. All that is missing in this place to bring all my happiness together is two people, and it is my hope to see them here soon.

In the meanwhile, until you and Madame d'Orbe come to crown such sweet and pure pleasures as I am learning to enjoy in this place, I wish to give you an idea of them through the description of a domestic economy that reflects the felicity of the masters of the house and causes it to be shared with those who live here. I hope, with respect to the plan you have in mind, that my reflections will some day have their use, and this hope helps also to inspire them.

I shall not describe to you the house at Clarens. You are familiar with it. You know what charm it has, what significant memories it affords me, how dear it must be to me, both for what it reveals to me, and for what it reminds me of. Madame de Wolmar rightly prefers to reside here rather than at Étange, a magnificent and grand château; but old, gloomy, uncomfortable, and its surroundings offer nothing comparable to what one sees around Clarens.

Since the masters of this house have established their home here, they have put to their use everything that served only as ornament; it is no longer a house made to be seen, but to be lived in. They have walled up long rows of rooms to change doors that were awkwardly situated,[51] they have divided rooms that were too large so as to have lodgings better laid out. They have replaced old-fashioned and sumptuous pieces of furniture with simple and convenient ones. Everything here is agreeable and cheerful; everything bespeaks plenty and elegance, nothing reeks of wealth and luxury.[52] There is not a single room where one is not recognizably in the country, and where one fails to find all the conveniences of the city. The same changes can be noticed out of doors. The farmyard has been enlarged by

reducing the size of the coach house. In place of an old, dilapidated billiard room they have put a fine wine press, and a dairy where once lived noisy Peacocks which have been got rid of. The vegetable garden was too small for the kitchen; the flower bed has been turned into a second one, but so elegant and so well designed that this bed thus disguised is more pleasing to the eye than before. The mournful Yews that covered the walls have been replaced with good espaliers of fruit trees. Instead of the useless horse chestnut, young black mulberry trees are beginning to shade the courtyard, and they have planted two rows of walnut trees down to the road instead of the old linden trees that flanked the avenue. Everywhere they have replaced attractive things with useful things, and attractiveness has almost always come out the better. As far as I am concerned at least, the noises of the farmyard, the cocks' crowing, the cattle's mooing, the harnessing of the carts, the meals in the fields, the return home of the workers, and all the instruments of rural economy give this house a more pastoral, more lively, more spirited, more festive appearance, a certain something that radiates joy and well-being, that it did not possess in its dreary dignity.

Their lands are not leased out but farmed under their own supervision, and this farming accounts for much of their occupations, their possessions, and their pleasures. The Étange Barony has only meadows, fields, and woods; but the production of Clarens is in vineyards, which are extensive, and as the difference of cultivation here has a more considerable effect than is the case with wheat, this constitutes yet another economic reason for having preferred to reside here. Nonetheless they go almost every year for the harvesting at their estate, and Monsieur de Wolmar goes there alone rather frequently. They follow the maxim of extracting from the land all it can yield, not to obtain a larger gain from it, but to feed more men. Monsieur de Wolmar contends that land produces in proportion to the number of hands that till it; better tilled it yields more; this excess production furnishes the means of tilling it better still; the more men and beasts you put on it, the more surplus it supplies over and above their subsistence. It is not known, he says, where this continual and reciprocal increase in product and laborers might end. On the contrary, neglected fields lose their fertility: the fewer men a region produces, the fewer commodities it produces. It is the paucity of inhabitants that prevents it from feeding the few it has, and the inhabitants of any area that loses population must sooner or later die of hunger.[53]

Possessing then much land and farming it all very industriously, they require, besides the farmyard domestics, a large number of day-workers; which provides them the pleasure of providing subsistence for many people

without inconvenience to themselves. When choosing these day-workers, they always prefer local ones and neighbors to foreigners or strangers. If they lose something by not always choosing the most robust, they are well repaid by the affection this preference inspires in those who are chosen, by the advantage of always having them around, and being able to count on them at all times, although they pay them only part of the year.

With all these workers they always fix two prices. The first is mandatory and rightful, the current local price, which they agree to pay them for their work. The other, a bit higher, is a bonus, which they are paid only insofar as they are found satisfactory, and it almost always turns out that what they do to prove satisfactory is worth more than the extra pay they are given. For Monsieur de Wolmar is principled and stern, and never allows the procedures of favor and benevolence to degenerate into custom and abuse. These workers have supervisors who prod and observe them. These supervisors are farm hands who themselves work and have an interest in the others' work because of the small share they are allotted beyond their own wages, on all that is brought in thanks to them. Moreover, Monsieur de Wolmar checks on them himself nearly every day, often several times a day, and his wife likes to join in these rounds. Finally, during the peak labors, Julie each week gives a gratification of twenty batz*[54] to the one worker of all, day-workers or servants all taken together, who in the master's judgment has been the most diligent during that week. All these incentives for emulation which appear expensive, applied with prudence and justice, imperceptibly make everyone industrious, diligent, and ultimately pay back more than they cost; but as its benefit becomes apparent only with consistency and time, few know how and care to make use of it.

However an even more effective means, the only one that appears not to be inspired by economic views and is more suited to Madame de Wolmar, is to win the affection of these good folk by extending hers to them.[55] She does not believe that money can suffice to pay for the pains taken on her behalf, and thinks she owes services to anyone who has rendered some to her. Workers, domestics, all those who have served her even for a single day all become her children; she shares in their pleasures, in their sorrows, in their lot; she inquires about their business, their interests are hers; she takes on a thousand cares in their behalf, she gives them advice, she patches up their disputes, and expresses the affability of her character not with honeyed, ineffectual words, but with genuine services and continual acts of kindness. They, in return, drop everything at her slightest sign; they fly when she speaks; a mere look from her inspires their zeal, in her presence they are content, in her absence they talk about her and inspire each

* Local small coin.

other to serve her. Her charms and words do much, her gentleness, her virtues do more. Ah Milord! how powerful and worthy of worship is the empire of beneficent beauty!

As to the masters' personal service, they have eight domestics in the house, three women and five men, not counting the baron's valet or the Farmhands. It is rare to be badly served by a small number of Domestics; but one would think from the zeal of these, that each one, in addition to his own service, feels responsible for that of the seven others, and from their concord, that a single one does it all. You never see them idle and unoccupied diddling in an antechamber or romping in the courtyard, but always engaged in some useful task; they help out in the farmyard, in the Wine cellar, in the Kitchen; the gardener has no help other than them, and what is particularly agreeable is that it can be seen they do all these things gaily and with pleasure.

They choose them young to get them the way they want them. The maxim here is not the one I saw prevailing in Paris and London, of hiring fully trained Domestics, in other words fully confirmed Rascals, ever changing jobs, who in every house where they touch down adopt the shortcomings of both servants and masters, and make it their business to serve everyone, without ever attaching themselves to anyone. Neither honesty nor loyalty nor zeal can prevail in the midst of such folk, and this pile of riffraff brings ruin to the master and corrupts the children in all affluent houses. Here the selection of Domestics is an important matter. They are not merely regarded as mercenaries of whom only diligent service is required; but as members of the family, which a wrong choice could unsettle. The first thing that is required of them is to be honest, the second is to love their master, the third is to serve him as he sees fit; but provided a master is reasonable and a domestic intelligent, the third always follows from the other two. They are therefore drawn not from the city but from the country. Their first position is here, and it will surely be the last for all those who prove to be of some worth. They are picked from some large family overburdened with children, whose fathers and mothers themselves come to offer them. They are chosen young, of good constitution, in good health and of pleasant physiognomy. Monsieur de Wolmar questions them, examines them, then presents them to his wife. If they please both, they are admitted, first on probation, then to the number of the servants, that is to say, the children of the house, and a few days are spent teaching them with much patience and care what they are expected to do. The service is so simple, so regular, so uniform, the masters are so little inclined to whims and bad humor, and their domestics take to them so promptly, that it is soon learned. Their situation is easy; they enjoy a well-being they did not have

at home; but they are not allowed to go soft with idleness, the mother of vice. They are not allowed to turn into Gentlemen and become haughty in servitude. They continue to work as they did in the paternal household; they have, in a manner of speaking, merely changed father and mother, and acquired more affluent ones. In this manner, they do not come to disdain their former rustic life. If ever they were to leave here, there is not one who would not rather resume his peasant condition than to bear being a servant elsewhere. In all, I have never seen a household where each performed his service better, and thought of it less as service.

So it is that by training and drilling one's own Domestics one has no need to entertain this objection, as common as it is senseless: I will have trained them for others. Train them as you should, it could be answered, and they will never serve others. If you think only of yourself when you train them, then they are quite right to think only of themselves when they leave you; but attend a bit more to them and they will remain attached to you. Intention alone creates obligations, and a person who takes advantage of something I want only for myself owes me no gratitude.

So as doubly to prevent the same difficulty, Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar employ yet another means that seems to me very well calculated. When setting up their household they counted up the number of domestics they could maintain in a house fitted out at about the level of their fortune, and they found that the number came to fifteen or sixteen; to be served better they reduced it to half that; so that with less display their service is much more diligent. In order to be served better yet, they motivated the same servants to serve them for a long time. A domestic entering their service earns the standard wage; but this wage increases every year by a twentieth; thus after twenty years it would be more than doubled and the domestics' keep would then be roughly proportional to masters' means: but it does not take a great algebrist to see that the outlay for this increase is more apparent than real, that they will have few double wages to pay, and that were they obliged to pay them to all, the advantage of having been well served for twenty years would more than compensate for the additional expenditure. You can well appreciate, Milord, that this is a sure expedient for making the domestics ever more attentive and attaching them to oneself to the degree one becomes attached to them. There is not merely prudence, but also equity in such a setup. Is it fair for a newcomer, having no affection, and who is perhaps just a ne'er-do-well, to receive upon entry the same salary that is given an old servant, whose zeal and loyalty are proven by long service, and who moreover as he ages is approaching a time when he will be unable to earn his living? Besides, this latter reason does not apply here, and you can well believe that such humane masters do

not neglect duties that many masters lacking in charity ostentatiously fulfill, and that they do not abandon those of their servants who lose their capacity to serve due to infirmities or advancing age.

At this very moment I have a fairly striking example of this consideration. Baron d'Étange, intending to reward the long service of his valet with an honorable retirement, had sufficient credit to obtain for him from Their Excellencies[56] an easy and lucrative employment. Julie has just received from this old domestic a letter fit to draw tears, in which he begs her to get him permission to decline this employment. "I am old," he tells her, "I have lost all my family; I have no relatives left but my masters; all I long for is to end my days peacefully in the house where I have spent them.... Madame, when I held you in my arms at your birth, I asked God also to hold your children one day; he has granted me this favor; do not refuse me the favor of seeing them grow and prosper like you.... I who am accustomed to living in a house of peace, where shall I find another one like it to rest my old age?... Pray have the charity to write to Monsieur le Baron on my behalf. If he is displeased with me, let him dismiss me and give me no employment: but if I have faithfully served him for forty years, may he let me end my days in his service and yours; for me there could be no better reward." It is useless to ask whether Julie did write. I can see she would be just as dismayed to lose this old fellow as he would be to leave her. Am I wrong, Milord, to compare masters so cherished to fathers, and their domestics to their children? You see that that is what they consider themselves.

There has been no instance in this house of a domestic requesting his leave. It is even rare that they threaten someone with dismissal. This threat is all the more frightening because of how pleasant and easy service here is. The best fellows are always the most alarmed by it, and it is never necessary to resort to execution except with those who will be little missed. There is a further rule for this. When Monsieur de Wolmar has said: *You are fired*, one may implore the intercession of Madame, sometimes obtain it and a return to favor through her pleading; but a dismissal she gives is irrevocable, there is no more mercy to hope for. This convention is very well calculated to temper both the excessive confidence that might be placed in the wife's gentleness, and the extreme fear that the husband's inflexibility could cause. Yet these words are always extremely dreaded coming from an equitable and dispassionate master; for besides the fact that one is not certain to obtain mercy, and that it is never granted twice to the same person, these words alone entail loss of seniority, and a new term of service is begun upon re-entry: which deters old domestics from insolence and increases their circumspection, in proportion to what they have to lose by it.

The three women are, the chambermaid, the children's governess, and the cook. The latter is a most proper and clever peasant whom Madame de Wolmar has taught to cook; for in this still simple country* young ladies of all stations learn to perform themselves all the tasks that the women in their service will one day perform in their house, so they will know how to direct them as needed and not be pushed around by them. The chambermaid is no longer Babi; she has been sent back to Étange where she was born; she has been put in charge of the château and made overseer of the receipts, which in a way makes her comptroller of the Steward. Monsieur de Wolmar had been urging his wife for a long time to make this arrangement, without managing to persuade her to send away one of her mother's former domestics, even though she had more than one reason to complain of her. Finally after their latest discussion on the subject, she consented, and Babi has left. This woman is intelligent and loyal, but indiscrete and garrulous. I suspect she has more than once betrayed her mistress's secrets, that Monsieur de Wolmar is not unaware of this, and that in order to avert a similar indiscretion with respect to some stranger, this wise man has found a way to put her to use so as to take advantage of her good qualities without being exposed to the bad ones. Her replacement is that same Fanchon Regard of whom you heard me speak formerly with such pleasure. Despite Julie's prediction, her kindnesses, her father's, and yours, this young woman, so honest and decent, has not been happy in her marriage. Claude Anet, who had borne his poverty so well, was not able to endure an easier situation. Finding himself well off he neglected his trade, and having gotten himself deeply into debt he fled the country, leaving his wife with a child which she has since lost. Julie after taking her in taught her all the simple skills of a chambermaid, and I was never more pleasantly surprised than when I found her on duty the day I arrived. Monsieur de Wolmar makes much of her, and both have entrusted her with the duty of keeping an eye both on their children and on their governess. The latter is a simple and credulous, but attentive, patient, and docile villager; so nothing has been overlooked to prevent city vices from infiltrating a house whose masters neither have nor tolerate them.

Although all the domestics have just one common table, on the other hand there is little communication between the two sexes: this item is considered very important here. They do not share the opinion of those masters who are indifferent to everything beyond their own interests, who want only to be served well, without bothering additionally about what their servants are up to. They think, on the contrary, that those who wish only to be served well cannot be for long. Too intimate relations between

* Simple! Then it must have greatly changed.

the sexes never lead to anything but trouble. Most of the disorders in a household stem from gossip sessions among the chambermaids. If the head butler takes a liking to one of them, he does not fail to seduce her at his master's expense. Agreement amongst the men alone or amongst the women is not firm enough to create much of a problem. But it is always from a combination of men and women that secret monopolies become established which in the long run bring the most affluent families to ruin. Here they therefore keep watch on the proper behavior and modesty of the women, not only for reasons of good morals and honesty, but also through well-calculated self-interest; for no matter what they say, no one discharges his duty well if he does not take it to heart, and there never were any but honorable people who managed to take their duty to heart.[57]

To forestall a dangerous intimacy between the two sexes, they are not constrained here by explicit laws which they would be tempted to break secretly; but without any apparent intention, customs are instituted that are more powerful even than authority. They are not forbidden to see each other, but it happens by design that they have neither the opportunity nor the will to do so. This is achieved by assigning to them entirely different occupations, habits, tastes, pleasures. Given the admirable order that reigns here, they sense that in a well-run house men and women should have little communication with each other. Even someone who might accuse his master's orders on this subject of arbitrariness, submits without reluctance to a way of living that is not formally prescribed to him, but that he himself judges the best and most natural. Julie asserts it is that indeed; she maintains that neither love nor conjugal union imply continual contact between the sexes. According to her, wife and husband are certainly destined to live together, but not in the same manner; they must act in concert without performing the same acts. The life that would charm the one would, she says, be unbearable to the other; the inclinations nature imparts to them are as various as the functions she assigns them; their amusements differ no less than do their duties; in a word, both work toward mutual happiness by different means, and this division of labors and duties is their union's strongest tie.

For my part, I admit that my own observations are rather favorable to this maxim. Indeed, is it not a uniform practice of all peoples on earth, aside from the French and their imitators, that men live amongst themselves, and women likewise? If they see each other, it is rather by appointment and almost furtively like the Spouses of Lacedaemon,[58] than by indiscreet and perpetual mingling likely to confound and disfigure in them nature's wisest distinctions. Even savages are not found indistinctly mixed, men with women. In the evening the family gathers together; every man

spends the night with his wife; separation begins again at daybreak, and the two sexes have nothing further in common except meals at most. Such is the order that its universality shows to be the most natural, and even in the countries where it is perverted one can still see its vestiges. In France where men have subjected themselves to living in the manner of women and remaining forever enclosed in a room with them, the involuntary restlessness they retain shows that it is not for this they were destined. Whereas the women remain tranquilly seated or reclining on their lounge-chair, you see the men rise, walk to and fro, sit back down with a continual restlessness, a mechanical instinct constantly struggling against the constraint in which they place themselves, and urging them willy-nilly toward that active and laborious life nature assigned them.[59] This is the only people on earth where men remain standing at the theater, as if they went to the pit[60] to relieve themselves from having sat all day long in the salon. And so they feel so strongly the tedium of this effeminate and domesticated indolence that in order to provide themselves at least some sort of activity they yield at home their place to strangers, and go try to temper this aversion in the company of other men's wives.

Madame de Wolmar's maxim is very well supported by the example of her own household. Everyone belonging, as it were, wholly to his own sex, the women here live quite separate from the men. In order to prevent suspect relationships between them, her big secret is to keep the ones and the others constantly occupied; for their tasks are so different that only idleness can bring them together. In the morning everyone goes about his duties, and no leisure is left to anyone for troubling someone else's. In the afternoon the men's department is the garden, the farmyard, or other rural chores; the women are busy in the nursery until it is time for them to walk the children, often even with their mistress, and which they find pleasant since it is the only moment when they take the air. The men, sufficiently exercised by the day's labor, have no desire to go walking and rest indoors.

Every Sunday after the evening sermon the women gather together again in the nursery with some lady relative or friend they invite by turns with Madame's permission. There as they await a small feast she treats them to, they chat, sing, play shuttlecock, jackstraws, or some other game of skill of a kind the children like to watch, until the time they can enjoy doing it themselves. The collation arrives, consisting of some dairy foods, waffles, pastries, merveilles* or other dishes to the children's and women's liking. Wine is always excluded, and the men, who seldom enter this little Gynaeceum** at any time, never partake of this collation, which Julie

* A local sort of cake.

** The women's apartment.

rarely fails to attend. So far I am the only man to have been so privileged. Last Sunday by greatly insisting I received permission to accompany her. She took considerable pains to see that I appreciated this favor. She told me out loud that she would grant it to me this one time, and that she had refused it to Monsieur de Wolmar himself. Imagine whether petty feminine vanity was flattered, and whether a lackey would have been well received had he wished to be admitted to the exclusion of the master?[61]

I had a delicious snack. Are there any dishes in the world comparable to the milk products hereabouts? Think what they must be like coming from a dairy over which Julie presides, and eaten by her side. Fanchon served me *grus* and *céracée*,*[62] waffles, gingerbread. All of it instantly disappeared. Julie laughed at my appetite. I see, she said giving me another plateful of cream, that your stomach does itself credit everywhere, and that you do as well by women's fare as you did with the Valaisans[63]; and with no more impunity, I retorted; one sometimes becomes as drunk with the one as the other, and reason can go astray just as well in a chalet as in a cellar.[64] She lowered her eyes without replying, blushed, and started caressing her children. This was sufficient to elicit my remorse. Milord, that was my first indiscretion, and I hope it will be the last.

There reigned in this gathering a certain air of age-old simplicity that touched my heart; I saw on all the faces the same gaiety and more candor, perhaps, than if there had been men present. Founded on confidence and attachment, the familiarity that reigned between the servants and the mistress only strengthened respect and authority, and the services rendered and received seemed to be only tokens of reciprocal friendship. The very choice of dishes helped to make them interesting. Milk products and sugar are one of the sex's natural tastes and as it were the symbol of the innocence and sweetness that constitute its most endearing ornament. Men, on the contrary, usually seek strong flavors and spirits, foods more suited to the active and laborious life that nature requires of them; and when it happens that these diverse tastes are perverted and confounded, it is an almost infallible mark of a disorderly mingling of the sexes. Indeed I have observed that in France, where women live all the time in the company of men, they have completely lost the taste for dairy products, the men largely that for wine, and in England where the two sexes are less confounded, their specific tastes have survived better. In general, I think one could often find some index of people's character in the choice of foods they prefer. The Italians who live largely on greenery are effeminate and flaccid. You Englishmen, great meat eaters, have something harsh that

* Excellent milk derivatives made on mount Salève. I doubt they are known under this name in the Jura, especially at the other end of the lake.

smacks of barbarity in your inflexible virtues.[65] The Swiss, naturally cold, peaceful, and simple, but violent and extreme in anger, like both kinds of food, and drink both milk and wine. The Frenchman, flexible and changeable, consumes all foods and adapts to all characters. Julie herself could serve as my example: for although she is sensual and likes to eat, she likes neither meat, nor stews, nor salt, and has never tasted wine straight. Excellent vegetables, eggs, cream, fruit; those are her daily fare, and were it not for fish of which she also is very fond, she would be a true Pythagorean.[66]

It serves no purpose to restrain the women if the men are not restrained as well, and this part of the rule, no less important than the other, is yet more difficult; for attack is generally more vigorous than defense: such is the intention of the preserver of nature.[67] In a Republic citizens are restrained by morals, principles, virtue: but how can domestics, mercenaries, be contained other than by constraint and coercion? The master's whole art consists in hiding this coercion under the veil of pleasure or interest, so that they think they desire all they are obliged to do. Sunday's idleness, and the right, of which one can hardly deprive them, of going wherever they wish when their functions do not keep them at home, often destroy in a single day the examples and lessons of the other six. The frequentation of the cabaret, the conversation and maxims of their comrades, the company of loose women, soon ruin them for their masters and for themselves, and render them through a thousand flaws incapable of serving, and unworthy of freedom.

This problem is remedied by retaining them at home by means of the same motives that led them to go out. What were they going elsewhere to do? To drink and gamble at the cabaret. They drink and gamble at home. The whole difference is that the wine costs them nothing, they do not get drunk, and there are winners in the game without anyone ever losing. Here is how this is achieved.

Behind the house is a shaded avenue, where they have set up a game field. There the liveried servants and the farmyard workers gather in summer on Sunday after the sermon to gamble several rounds, not for money, it is not allowed, nor for wine, it is provided; but for a stake put up by the masters' generosity. This stake is always some small item or some furnishing for their own use. The number of rounds is proportional to the stake's value, so that when this stake gets to be pretty valuable as with silver buckles, a collar clasp, silk stockings, a fine hat, or something similar, they usually take several sessions to compete for it. They are not limited to a single kind of game, these are varied, so that the ablest in one does not walk away with all the stakes, and to make them all more skillful and strong through a variety of exercises. Sometimes the object is to capture on the run a goal

placed at the other end of the avenue; sometimes to throw the same stone the farthest; sometimes to carry the same burden the longest. Sometimes the prize is decided by shooting at a target. To most of these games is added some ceremony that prolongs them and makes them entertaining. The master and mistress often honor them with their presence; sometimes the children are brought along, even strangers come attracted by curiosity, and some would ask nothing better than to compete; but none is ever admitted without the masters' approval and the consent of the players, who would have nothing to gain by granting it easily. Little by little this custom has turned into a sort of spectacle where the actors motivated by the public attention prefer the glory of applause to the attraction of the prize. By growing more vigorous and agile, they take more pride in themselves, and becoming accustomed to deriving their value from themselves rather than from what they possess, although they are mere servants, honor becomes dearer to them than money.

It would take too long to list for you all the advantages gained here thanks to a stratagem that is so puerile in appearance and always scoffed at by vulgar minds, whereas it is the nature of true genius to produce great effects by small means.[68] Monsieur de Wolmar told me it cost him scarcely fifty écus[69] a year for these little institutions which his wife was the first to think up. But, he said, how many times over do you think I get that sum back in my household and business thanks to the vigilance and attention devoted to their service by loyal servants who derive all their pleasures from their masters; thanks to the interest they take in the service of a house they regard as their own; thanks to the advantage of profiting in their labors from the vigor they acquire in their games; thanks to the advantage of keeping them always healthy by protecting them from the customary excesses of their peers, and the illnesses that are the usual consequence of such excesses; thanks to the advantage of preventing in them the thievery that disorder infallibly brings with it, and keeping them always honest folk; finally thanks to the pleasure of having at home and at little expense recreations pleasant even for ourselves? And if by chance there were some one among our servants, man or woman, who cannot adapt to our rules and prefers the freedom of running off wherever he likes under various pretexts; we never refuse him permission to do so; but we regard this taste for license as a very suspect indication, and we lose no time getting rid of those who possess it. Thus these same entertainments that keep us some good people; also serve as a test for selecting them. Milord, I admit that I have never seen anywhere but here masters training at the same time, in the same men, good domestics for their personal service, good peasants to

till their lands, good soldiers to defend the fatherland, and fine people for all the stations to which fortune may call them.

In winter the pleasures change in kind as do the labors. On Sunday, all the house servants and even the neighbors, men and women alike, gather after the service in a lower Room where they find a fire, wine, fruit, cakes, and a fiddle to dance by. Madame de Wolmar never fails to come by at least for a few minutes, in order to maintain order and modesty through her presence, and it is not rare for her to dance as well, even with her own servants. When I learned of this rule at first it seemed to me less in keeping with the strictness of protestant morals.[70] I told Julie so; and here is more or less what she answered me.

Pure morality is so burdened with strict duties that if in addition it is overburdened with unimportant formalities, it is nearly always at the expense of what is essential. They say that is the case for most Monks, who, subjected to a thousand useless rules, do not know what honor and virtue are. This flaw is less prevalent among us, but we are not entirely exempt from it. Our Churchmen, as superior in wisdom to all kinds of Priests as our Religion is superior to all the others in holiness, yet hold a few maxims that seem to be grounded more in prejudice than in reason. Such is the one that censures dancing and assemblies, as if there were more evil in dancing than in singing, as if each of these entertainments were not equally an inspiration of nature, and it were a crime to frolic together in innocent and honest recreation. As far as I am concerned, I think on the contrary that every time there is a participation of the two sexes any public diversion becomes innocent by the very fact it is public, whereas the most praiseworthy occupation is suspect when two people are alone together.*[71] Man and woman are destined for each other, it is nature's goal that they be united in marriage. Every false Religion combats nature; ours alone, which follows and corrects her, heralds an institution that is divine and suited to man. Thus it should not with respect to marriage add to the complications of the civil order difficulties not prescribed by the Gospel, and contrary to the spirit of Christianity. But tell me where young marriageable persons will have the opportunity to develop a taste for each other, and meet with more decency and circumspection than in a gathering where the eyes of the public, constantly focused on them, oblige them to watch themselves extremely carefully? In what way is God offended by a pleasant and beneficial activity, suited to the vivacity of young people, which consists in presenting themselves to each other with grace and pro-

* In my *Letter to Monsieur d'Alembert on Spectacles* I transcribed from this one the following passage, and a few others; but since at the time I was just preparing this edition, I thought I ought to wait until its publication to cite what I had taken from it.

priety, and on which the spectator imposes a solemnity that no one would dare to disrupt? Can one imagine a more honest means of deceiving no one at least insofar as looks are concerned, and showing oneself with the attractions and shortcomings one may possess to people whose interest it is to know us well before taking on the obligation of loving us? Does not the duty of cherishing each other supersede that of pleasing each other, and is it not worth the trouble for two virtuous, Christian persons who are planning to unite, thus to prepare their hearts for the mutual love that God prescribes to them?

What happens in those places where a perpetual constraint prevails, where the most innocent merriment is punished as a crime, where young people of both sexes never dare assemble in public, and where a Pastor's indiscreet strictness has nothing to preach in God's name but servile constriction, and gloom and boredom? They evade an insufferable tyranny that nature and reason disavow. For permissible pleasures that playful and frolicking young people are deprived of, they substitute more dangerous ones. Cleverly contrived private encounters take the place of public gatherings. By dint of hiding as if one were guilty, one is tempted to become so. Innocent joy likes to break forth in broad daylight, but vice is the friend of shadows, and never were innocence and secrecy bedfellows for long. My dear friend, she said to me, pressing my hand as if to convey her repentance to me and infuse into my heart the purity of hers[72]; who ought to feel better than we the importance of this maxim? What sufferings and pains, what remorse and tears we would have spared ourselves over so many years, if we two, loving virtue as we always have, had been able to foresee further in advance the dangers it runs when two people are alone together!

Once more, continued Madame de Wolmar in a more subdued tone, it is not in crowded gatherings where everyone watches and listens to us, but in private conversations where secrecy and liberty prevail, that morals can incur risks. It is on this principle, that when my domestics of both sexes assemble, I am very pleased if they all attend. I even approve their inviting those of the neighborhood youth whose association cannot harm them, and I learn with great pleasure that in order to praise the morals of one of our young neighbors, they say: he is welcome at Monsieur de Wolmar's. In this we have yet another objective. The men who serve us are all bachelors, and among the women the children's governess is yet unmarried; it is not right for the reserve in which both men and women live here to deprive them of an honest establishment. We try in these small gatherings to provide them this opportunity under our watch in order to help them

choose better, and by working thus toward the formation of happy couples we increase the happiness of our own.

Perhaps in addition I should justify myself for dancing with these good folk; but I would rather plead no contest on this point, and I frankly admit that my principal motive in this is the pleasure it gives me. You know that I have always shared my Cousin's passion for the dance; but after losing my mother I gave up balls and all public gatherings for life; I kept my word, even at my wedding, and will keep it, and do not believe I am going against it by dancing sometimes at home with my guests and domestics. It is an activity useful to my health during the sedentary life we are forced to live here in the wintertime. It entertains me innocently; for when I have had a good dance my heart finds no fault with me. It also entertains Monsieur de Wolmar, my coquetry in this goes no farther than pleasing him. It is for me that he comes to the place where we dance; his servants are all the happier to be honored by their master's watching; they also express joy at seeing me among them. Finally I find that this moderate familiarity forms between us a bond of tenderness and attachment that brings back a little natural humanity[73] by mitigating the lowliness of servitude and the rigor of authority.

There, Milord, you have what Julie told me on the subject of the dance, and I marvelled how such affability could exist alongside such subordination, and how she and her husband could descend and put themselves so often on the same level with their domestics, without the latter being tempted to take them literally and put themselves on the same level in their turn. I do not believe there are Sovereigns in Asia served in their Palaces with more respect than these good masters are in their house. I know nothing less imperious than their orders and nothing so promptly executed: they entreat and the servants fly; they forgive and the servants feel their mistakes. I have never understood better how little the force of the things we say depends upon the words we use.

This led me to another reflection on the vain solemnity of masters. Namely, that it is not so much their familiarities as their flaws that engender contempt for them in their own house, and that the insolence of domestics indicates a vice-ridden master rather a weak one: for nothing makes them bolder than acquaintance with his vices, and all those they discover in him are as they see it so many excuses for disobeying a man they can no longer bring themselves to respect.

The servants imitate the masters, and since they imitate them clumsily they expose in their conduct the flaws which the gloss of education hides better in others. In Paris I used to ascertain the morals of the women I

knew by the air and tone of their chambermaids, and this rule never failed me. Besides the fact that the chambermaid once in her mistress's confidence makes her pay dearly for her discretion, she acts as the other thinks and discloses all her maxims by practicing them crudely. In all things the masters' example is stronger than their authority, and it is not natural for their domestics to seek to be more honest than they are. There is no use in yelling, cursing, abusing, firing, replacing them all; all that does not result in good service. When he who gives not a whit about his servants' contempt and hatred nonetheless believes he is well served, that is because he is satisfied with what he sees and their seeming punctiliousness, without taking into account the thousand secret wrongs constantly perpetrated on him, the source of which he never perceives. But where is the man so devoid of honor that he can bear the disdain of his whole retinue? Where is the woman so depraved that slander no longer fazes her? How many Ladies, in Paris and in London, think they are much honored, who would melt in tears if they heard what is said about them in their antechamber? Fortunately for their peace of mind they take comfort in taking these Arguses[74] for imbeciles, flattering themselves that their servants do not perceive what they do not bother to hide from them. And so in their reluctant obedience they in turn hide nothing of their contempt for their mistresses. Masters and servants mutually sense that it is useless to try making the others respect them.

Domestics' judgment seems to me the surest and most difficult test of their masters' virtue, and I remember, Milord, having thought well of yours in the Valais before I knew you, simply from the fact that though you spoke rather roughly to your servants, they were not for that less attached to you, and that they manifested among themselves as much respect for you in your absence as if you had been within hearing. It has been said that no one is a hero to his valet[75]; that may be, but the just man has his valet's respect; which sufficiently shows that heroism has but a vain appearance, and that there is nothing solid but virtue. In this house especially one recognizes the extent of its empire in the domestics' approval. An approval all the surer in that it does not consist in vain praises, but in the natural expression of what they feel. Never hearing anything here to make them believe that other masters are not just like their own, they do not praise them for virtues they hold common to all; but in their simplicity they praise God for having placed the rich on earth for the happiness of those who serve them, and for the relief of the poor.

Servitude is so unnatural to man that it cannot possibly exist without a measure of discontent. Yet one respects the master and says nothing about it. Should some grumbling against the mistress be vented, it is better than

praise. No one complains that she lacks benevolence for himself, but that she showers just as much on others; no one can suffer her comparing his zeal to that of his comrades, and each would like to be first in favor as he believes he is in attachment. This is their sole complaint and their greatest injustice.

Subordination of inferiors is complemented by harmony between equals, and this aspect of domestic administration is not the least difficult. In the rivalries of jealousy and self-interest that forever divide the servants in a household, even in one as small as this one, they hardly ever remain united but at the master's expense. If they concert, it is to connive in stealing; if they are faithful each tries to look good at the expense of the others; they must be enemies or accomplices, and it is hard to see how one can avoid both their larceny and their quarrels. Most heads of households are familiar only with alternation between these two difficulties. Some, choosing their own interest over honesty, encourage this inclination of Servants to make secret reports and think they are achieving a masterpiece of prudence by turning them into each others' spies and overseers. Others more indolent would rather be robbed and let everybody live in peace; they make it almost a point of honor always to give a cool reception to information that a pure zeal sometimes extracts from a faithful Servant. All are equally mistaken. The former, by provoking within their household continual disruptions, inconsistent with discipline and order, merely gather a band of rascals and snitchers who betray their comrades in training for perhaps some day betraying their masters. The latter, by refusing to learn what goes on in their household, countenance leagues against themselves, encourage the bad ones, discourage the good ones, and maintain at great cost nothing but arrogant and lazy knaves who, concerting at the master's expense, consider their services as favors, and their thefts as rights.*

It is a great mistake in domestic as in civil economy to attempt to combat one vice with another or create between them a sort of equilibrium, as if what saps the foundations of order could ever serve to establish it! With this bad system one only ends up compounding all the difficulties. The vices tolerated in a house are not the only ones that prosper therein; let one sprout, a thousand others will follow. Soon they undo the servants who have them, ruin the master who suffers them, corrupt or scandalize the children keen on observing them. What unworthy father would dare

* I have studied fairly closely the system of large households, and I have clearly seen that it is impossible for a master who has twenty domestics ever to find out whether there is an honorable man among them, and not to take for such the nastiest knave in the bunch. That alone would kill any desire I might have of being one of the rich. One of life's sweetest pleasures, the pleasure of confidence and respect, is lost to these unhappy people. They pay very dearly for all their gold.

place some advantage in the balance with this latter evil? What honorable man would wish to be the head of a household, if it were impossible for him to conciliate peace and loyalty in his house, and if he had to purchase his domestics' zeal at the price of their mutual goodwill?

Anyone who had seen this house alone would not even imagine that such a difficulty could exist, so greatly does the union of its members appear to arise from their attachment to the heads. It is here one finds the palpable example that there is no way to love the master sincerely without loving all those who are dependent upon him: a truth which serves as foundation to Christian charity. Is it not entirely to be expected that the children of the same father should treat each other as brothers? That is what they tell us every day at Church without bringing us to feel it; it is what all the inhabitants of this house feel without being told.

This propensity toward concord begins with the choice of Subjects. When he hires them Monsieur de Wolmar does not examine solely whether they suit his wife and himself, but whether they suit one another, and a conspicuous antipathy between two excellent domestics would suffice to get one of them dismissed at once: for, says Julie, so small a household, one within which they constantly remain, and are continually in each other's presence, has to suit them all equally well, and would be like hell for them if it were not a house of peace. They must regard it as the paternal household where all are one single family. A single person who alienated the others could make them loath it, and this displeasing object being continually before their eyes, they would not be well off here either in terms of themselves or of us.

After matching them up as well as possible, they unite them so to speak despite themselves by means of the services they are more or less forced to render to each other, and they make it so that each one has a palpable interest in being loved by all his comrades. No one is as welcome seeking mercy for himself as for another; thus he who desires to obtain it tries to prevail upon another to speak for him, and this is all the easier in that whether one grants or refuses a favor thus requested, it is always counted as a merit to the one who served as intercessor. On the contrary, those who are good only for themselves are rebuffed. Why, they are told, should I grant what is being asked for you when you have never asked anything for another? Is it fair for you to be luckier than your comrades, because they are more willing to help than you? They go further; they invite them to help each other silently, unostentatiously, without making a show of it. Which is all the less difficult to obtain in that they know very well that the master, witness to this discretion, thinks the more of them for it; thus self-interest gains thereby and †pride is not hurt. They are so persuaded of this

general disposition, and such confidence reigns amongst them, that when someone has some mercy to ask, he brings it up at their table by way of conversation; often without doing anything more than that he finds that it has been asked and received, and not knowing whom to thank, he is indebted to all.

It is by this means and others like it that they inspire among them an attachment born of the one each has for his master, and subordinate to it. Thus, far from conspiring to his detriment, they are all united only to serve him better. Whatever interest they may have in loving each other, they have an even greater one in pleasing him; zeal for his service takes precedence over their mutual goodwill, and considering themselves injured by losses that would impede his ability to reward a good servant, all of them are equally unable to suffer in silence the wrong that any one of them might try to do to him. To me there is something sublime about this part of the system established in this house, and I cannot admire enough how Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar managed to transform the vile role of accuser into a function of zeal, integrity, courage, as noble, or at least as praiseworthy as it was among the Romans.

They began by destroying or deterring, clearly, simply, and with perceptible examples, that criminal and servile morality, that mutual tolerance at the master's expense, that a bad servant does not fail to preach to the good ones under the guise of a charitable maxim. They made them well understand that the precept of covering the faults of one's neighbor applies only to those that do no one harm, that an injustice witnessed and silenced, and that hurts a third person, is an injustice one commits oneself, and that since it is only the sentiment of our own failings that impels us to forgive those of others, no one likes to suffer knaves who is not a knave himself. Based on these principles, true in general man to man, and much more rigorous yet in the closer relationship between servant and master, they hold here as indisputable that whoever sees a wrong perpetrated against his masters without reporting it is even more guilty than the one who committed it; for the latter is deceived in his act by the profit he anticipates from it, but the former composedly and without advantage has no other motive for his silence than a profound indifference to justice, to the good of the house he serves, and a secret desire to imitate the example he conceals. So that when the fault is great, he who committed it can still sometimes hope for forgiveness, but the witness who kept it silent is unfailingly dismissed as a man prone to evildoing.

On the other hand they suffer no accusation that can be suspected of injustice and calumny; that is to say that none is heard in the absence of the accused. If someone comes singly to report something against his com-

rade, or to complain of him personally, they ask him whether he is adequately informed, whether he has first talked it over with the person he has just complained about? If he says no, they further ask how he can judge an action of which he does not know the motives well enough? This action, they tell him, may have to do with some other one you know nothing about; there is perhaps some circumstance that tends to justify or excuse it, that you do not know. How dare you condemn this conduct before you know the reasons of the person who acted? A word of explanation would perhaps have justified it in your eyes? Why take the risk of condemning it unjustly and exposing me to sharing in your injustice? If he insists that he has first talked it over with the accused; why then, they reply, are you appearing without him, as if you were afraid he might belie what you have to say? What right have you to neglect for me the precaution you thought you needed to take for yourself? Is it proper to want me to assess on your word an act you did not wish to assess based on what you witnessed, and would you not be responsible for the biased assessment I might make of it, if I limited myself to your deposition alone? Then they propose to send for the person he is accusing; if he agrees to it, the matter is soon resolved; if he is opposed, he is sent away after a stern reprimand, but they keep the secret, and they watch both of them so closely that it is not long before they know which of the two was in the wrong.

This rule is so well known and established that a domestic of this house is never heard to speak ill of one of his absent comrades, for they know it is a way to pass for a coward or a liar. When one of them accuses another, it is openly, candidly, and not only in his presence, but in the presence of all their comrades, so that among the witnesses of what he says he will find guarantors of his good faith. When it is a matter of personal quarrels, these are almost always settled by mediators without intruding on Monsieur or Madame; but when the master's sacred interest is at stake, there is no way the matter can remain secret; the guilty party must either turn himself in or he must have an accuser. These petty pleadings are very rare and take place only at table during the rounds Julie makes every day at her servants' dinner or supper and which Monsieur de Wolmar in jest calls her grand sessions.[76] Then after calmly listening to the complaint and the reply, if the matter concerns her service, she thanks the accuser for his zeal. I know, she tells him, that you love your comrade, you have always spoken well of him, and I applaud the fact that for you the love of duty and justice outweighs individual affections: such is the way of a faithful servant and honorable man. Then, if the accused is not in the wrong, she always adds some praise to his vindication. But if he is really guilty, she spares him some of the shame in the presence of the others. She assumes he has something to

say in his defense, which he does not wish to proclaim in front of everyone; she assigns him a time to hear him in private, and that is when she or her husband speaks to them[77] as the case requires. What is singular about this is that the harsher of the two is not the more dreaded, and that they fear Monsieur de Wolmar's stern reprimands less than Julie's stirring reproaches. The former, giving voice to justice and truth, humiliates and confounds the guilty parties; the latter makes them feel a mortal regret for it, by expressing her own at having to deprive them of her good will. Often she wrings from them tears of grief and shame, and it is not rare for her to melt at witnessing their repentance, in the hope she will not be obliged to keep her word.

Anyone who formed an opinion about all these precautions on the basis of what goes on in his own or his neighbors' house would perhaps judge them pointless or bothersome. But you, Milord, who have such exalted ideas about the duties and pleasures of the paterfamilias, and who know the natural empire that genius and virtue have over the human heart, you see the importance of these details, and you sense what makes them successful. Riches do not make a man rich, says the *Romance of the Rose*.[78] A man's goods are not in his coffers, but in the usage he makes of them; for he takes possession of the things he owns only through their employment, and abuses are always more inexhaustible than riches; and so it is that his pleasure is proportional not to his expenditure, but to his ability to regulate it. A fool can throw ingots into the sea and say they have given him pleasure: but what comparison is there between this extravagant pleasure and that which a wise man could have procured for a lesser sum? Only the order and discipline that multiply and perpetuate the usage of goods can transform pleasure into happiness. For if it is from the relation of things to us that genuine ownership arises[79]; if it is rather the use of riches than their acquisition which gives them to us, what duties are more important to the paterfamilias than the domestic economy and the good administration of his house, where the most perfect relations go directly to him, and the well-being of every member then adds to the head's?

Are the richest the happiest? What then does affluence do for felicity? But every well-regulated house is the image of the master's soul. Gilt panelling, luxury, and magnificence testify only to the vanity of him who displays them, whereas any time you see order reign without gloom, peace without slavery, plenty without profusion, then say confidently: it is a happy being who commands here.

For my part, I think that the most assured sign of true contentment of spirit is the withdrawn and domestic life, and that those who constantly go about seeking their happiness in others' homes do not have it in their

own. A paterfamilias who takes pleasure in his house is rewarded for the continual cares he assumes there by the continual enjoyment of nature's sweetest sentiments. Alone among mortals, he is master of his own felicity, because he is happy like God himself, without desiring anything more than what he already has[80]: like that immense Being he does not worry about expanding his possessions but of making them truly his own through the most perfect relations and the shrewdest direction: if he does not become richer through new acquisitions, he becomes richer by better possessing what he has. He had been enjoying only the income from his lands, he further enjoys those very lands by supervising their cultivation and visiting them continually. His Staff were strangers to him; he makes them his own, his children, he takes possession of them. He held rights only over their acts, he acquires new ones to their will. He was master only for a price, he becomes master through the sacred empire of respect and charitable deeds. Were fortune to strip him of his wealth, it could not take from him the hearts he has won to himself, it will not take children from their father; the whole difference is that he fed them yesterday, and tomorrow they will feed him. This is how one learns truly to enjoy one's possessions, one's family, and oneself; this is how the details of a household become delightful for the honorable man who is able to appreciate their value; this is how, far from regarding his duties as a burden, he makes them his happiness, and derives from his affecting and noble functions the glory and pleasure of being a man.

Now if these precious advantages are scorned or little known, and if even the few who seek them so rarely obtain them, all this is owing to the same cause. There are simple and sublime duties that few people are called to love and fulfill. Such are those of the paterfamilias; the air and bustle of the world inspire nothing but distaste for them, and they are still poorly fulfilled if one inclines to them only for reasons of avarice and self-interest. A man who thinks himself a good paterfamilias may be nothing more than a vigilant bursar; his property may prosper and his household go very badly. It takes loftier notions to enlighten, direct this important administration and give it a happy outcome. The first precaution by which the ordering of a house must begin is to suffer therein only honest folk who do not bring in the secret desire to upset that order. But are servitude and honesty compatible enough so one could hope to find domestics who are honest folk? No, Milord, to have them one must not look for them, but make them, and only a man of honor knows the art of fashioning other men of honor. In vain does a hypocrite attempt to adopt the voice of virtue, he can inspire the taste for it in no one, and if he knew how to make it desirable he would desire it himself. What use are frigid lessons contra-

dicted by a continual example, if not to give the impression that he who delivers them is making sport of others' credulity? What great absurdity speak those who exhort us to do as they say and not as they do! He who knows not what he is saying never says it well; for the language of the heart that moves and persuades is lacking. I have sometimes heard those awkwardly stilted conversations, which masters deliver in front of domestics as if in front of children to teach them lessons indirectly. Far from thinking they were for an instant duped by them, I have always seen them smile secretly at the ineptitude of the master who was taking them for idiots, by heavily intoning in front of them maxims they well knew not to be his.

All these vain subtleties are unknown in this house, and the great art of masters to make their domestics as they wish them is to show themselves to them as they are. Their conduct is always candid and open, because they do not fear lest their acts belie their words. As they do not have for themselves a moral different from the one they wish to impart to others, they have no need to be circumspect in what they say; a word that foolishly escapes them does not overturn the principles they have endeavored to establish. They do not indiscreetly reveal all their business, but they freely state all their maxims. At table, out strolling, in private or in front of everyone, they always maintain the same language; they state candidly what they think on every matter, and without their having anyone in mind, everyone finds some instruction in it. Since the domestics never see their master do anything that is not right, just, fair, they by no means regard justice as the poor man's tribute, as the wretched man's yoke, as one of the miseries of their condition. The care they take not to make workers travel needlessly, and waste whole days coming to request payment for their working days, accustoms them to appreciate the value of time. Seeing the masters' concern to save others' time, each concludes that his own is precious to them and counts idleness as a greater crime. The confidence of their servants in their integrity lends their practices a force that gives them stature and avoids abuses. No one fears that in each week's gratification the mistress will always find that it is the youngest or strongest who has been the most diligent. An old domestic is not afraid they will cavil at some trifle so as to save on the supplementary wages he is given. They have no hope of taking advantage of a disagreement between their masters to promote their own interests and obtain from one what the other has refused. Those who are marriageable are not afraid their establishment will be impeded so as to keep them longer, and their good service will thus work against them. Were some outside Servant to come and tell the servants in this house that a master and his domestics have reached a real state of war, that in doing him all the harm they can they are merely exercising a

right of reprisal, that masters being usurpers, liars, and scoundrels, there is nothing wrong in treating them the way they treat the Prince or the People or individuals, and cleverly return the harm they do with open violence; the man who spoke thus would be understood by no one; they don't even worry here about how to counter or prevent such talk; only those who provoke it are obliged to refute it.

There is never either sullenness nor reluctance in the obedience, because there is neither arrogance nor whim in the command, because they demand nothing but what is reasonable and useful, and they have enough respect for the dignity of man albeit in servitude to put him only to tasks that do not abase him. Moreover, here nothing is base save vice, and all that is useful and just is honest and seemly.

They suffer no intrigue without, nor is anyone tempted to have one. They know very well that their most secure fortune is dependent on the master's, and that they will never want for anything so long as the house prospers. By serving it they therefore attend to their own estate, and increase it while making their service pleasant; that is their greatest interest. But this word is hardly in its proper place in this instance, for I have never seen a system in which interest was more wisely channelled and where however it had less influence than here. Everything is done out of attachment: one would say that these venal souls are purified upon entering this abode of wisdom and union. One would say that a part of the master's wisdom and the mistress's sentiments had been transmitted to each of their servants; so judicious, beneficent, honest, and superior to their condition do they appear. To be well thought of, to be well considered, to have their masters' good will, is their greatest ambition, and they count the kind words said to them, as elsewhere the presents they are given.

There, Milord, are my principal observations on the part of this house's economy that concerns domestics and paid laborers. As for the masters' manner of living and the governance of the children, each of these items well deserves a letter of its own.[81] You know the purpose with which I began these remarks[82]; but in truth, it all makes for such a delightful tableau that one can enjoy looking at it without any other interest than the pleasure it gives.

LETTER XI

To Milord Edward

No, Milord, I do not retract a thing; everything one sees in this house joins together the agreeable and the useful; but useful occupations are not limited to activities that yield a profit; they additionally include any inno-

cent and simple amusement that nurtures the taste for retreat, work, moderation, and preserves in the person who indulges them a healthy soul, a heart free from the confusion of passions. Whereas indolent idleness engenders nothing but gloom and boredom, the charm of agreeable leisure is the fruit of an industrious life. One works only in order to enjoy; this alternation of labor and enjoyment is our genuine vocation. The repose that serves as relaxation for past labors and encouragement to further ones is not less necessary to man than labor itself.

After admiring the effect of the vigilance and attentions of the most respectable materfamilias in the ordering of the house, I have seen the result of her recreations in a secluded spot which is her favorite place to walk and which she calls her Elysium.[83]

For several days I had heard this Elysium mentioned but they seemed to be keeping me in the dark about it. Finally yesterday afternoon, with the intense heat making both the inside and outside of the house unbearable, Monsieur de Wolmar proposed to his wife that she give herself the afternoon off; and rather than retiring as usual to the nursery until early evening, to come with us and take the air in the orchard; she agreed to this and we went there together.

This place, although quite close to the house, is so well hidden by the shaded avenue separating them that it cannot be seen from anywhere. The heavy foliage surrounding it does not allow the eye to penetrate, and it is always carefully locked. I was no sooner inside than, the gate being masked by alders and hazelnuts that leave only two narrow passages along the sides, turning around I could no longer see where I had entered, and not seeing a gate, I found myself there as if I had dropped from the sky.

Upon entering this so-called orchard, I was struck by a pleasantly cool sensation which dark shade, bright and lively greenery, flowers scattered on every side, the bubbling of flowing water, and the songs of a thousand birds impressed on my imagination at least as much as my senses; but at the same time I thought I was looking at the wildest, most solitary place in nature, and it seemed to me I was the first mortal who ever had set foot in this wilderness. Surprised, stunned, transported by a spectacle so unexpected, I remained motionless for a moment, and cried out in spontaneous ecstasy: O Tinian! O Juan Fernandez!*[84] Julie, the ends of the earth are at your gate! Many people find them here as you do, she said with a smile; but twenty paces more bring them quickly back to Clarens: let us see whether the charm lasts longer with you. This is the same orchard where you once went walking, and where you and my Cousin used to have peach fights. You know that the grass here was rather dry, the trees rather sparse, offering rather little shade, and that there was no water. Now you

* Desert Islands in the Southern Sea, famous in Admiral Anson's voyage.

see it is cool, verdant, lush, decked out, covered with flowers, watered: what do you think it cost me to put it in its present state? For I should tell you that I am its superintendent and that my husband leaves it entirely to me. My goodness, I said, it cost you nothing but neglect. This place is enchanting, it is true, but rustic and wild; I see no human labor here. You closed the gate; water came along I know not how; nature alone did the rest and you yourself could never have managed to do as well. It is true, she said, that nature did it all, but under my direction, and there is nothing here that I have not designed. Make another guess. First, I replied, I do not understand how the work of time could have been done with labor and money. The trees.... With regard to that, said Monsieur de Wolmar, you will notice that there are not many very large ones, and those were here already. Moreover, Julie began this long before her marriage and almost immediately after her mother's death, when she came here with her father in quest of solitude. Well, I said, since you will have it that all these clumps of shrubs, these large arbors, these drooping bows, these groves so shaded came to be in seven or eight years[85] and that art had a hand in it, I estimate that if in so vast an enclosure you did all that for two thousand écus, you got a lot for your money. You are over by only two thousand écus, she said, it cost me nothing. How is that, nothing? No, nothing: unless you count a dozen of my gardener's days a year, an equal amount from two or three of my servants, and a few by Monsieur de Wolmar himself, who was not above being my garden boy on occasion. I understood nothing about this enigma; but Julie, who up till then had been holding me back, said as she let me go: Take a few steps and you will understand. Farewell Tinian, farewell Juan Fernandez, farewell the whole enchantment! In a moment you will have returned from the ends of the earth.

I began to roam ecstatically through this orchard thus metamorphosed; and although I did not find exotic plants and products of the Indies, I found the local ones arranged and combined in a manner that yielded a cheerier and pleasanter effect. The verdant grass, lush, but short and thick was mingled with wild thyme, balsam, garden thyme, marjoram, and other aromatic herbs. A thousand wild flowers shone there, among which the eye was surprised to detect a few garden varieties, which seemed to grow naturally with the others. From time to time I came upon dark thickets, as impervious to the sun's rays as the densest forest; these thickets were formed of trees of the most pliable wood, whose branches had been made to bend back to the ground, and take root, with an art similar to what the mangroves of America do naturally. In the more open places, I saw here and there without order or symmetry underbrush of rose, raspberry, and currant bushes, patches of lilac, hazel, elderberry, mockorange, broom, tri-

folium, which decked the earth while giving it a fallow appearance. I followed tortuous and irregular alleys bordered by these flowered woods, covered with a thousand garlands of Judean vine,[86] creeper, hops, bindweed, Bryony, clematis, and other plants of that sort, among which honeysuckle and jasmine saw fit to mingle. These garlands seemed to have been casually cast from tree to tree, as I had sometimes seen in forests, and formed something like draperies above us which protected us from the sun, while we had under foot a soft, comfortable, and dry path on a fine moss without sand, grass, or rough shoots. Only then did I discover, not without surprise that those green, dense shadows that had made such an impression on me from afar were formed simply by those creeping, parasitic plants that, trained upon the tree trunks, surround their crowns in the thickest foliage and their feet in shade and coolness. I even observed that by means of a rather simple device they had made several of these plants take root on the trunks themselves, so that they could reach farther while having less to grow. You realize of course that the fruit is not improved by all these additions; but in this place alone they have sacrificed the useful to the agreeable, and on the rest of their lands they have tended the saplings and trees so well that not counting this orchard the fruit harvest never fails to be more abundant than before. If you consider how enchanted one sometimes feels at spying a wild fruit deep in the wood and even taking refreshment from it, you will understand the pleasure one has in finding in this artificial wilderness excellent and ripe fruits even though they are scattered and unhandsome; which further affords the pleasure of seeking and selecting.

All these little walkways were bordered and crossed by clear, crystalline water, sometimes circulating through the grass and flowers in nearly imperceptible rivulets; sometimes in larger streams running over pure and dappled pebbles which made the water more sparkling. One could see springs bubbling and gushing from the earth, and sometimes deeper channels in which calm and serene water reflected objects to the eye. I now understand all the rest, I said to Julie: but these currents I see on every side.... They come from there, she replied, pointing in the direction of the terrace of her garden. It is that same stream which at great cost supplies a fountain on the lawn which no one cares about. Monsieur de Wolmar does not wish to destroy it, out of respect for my father who had it built: but what pleasure it gives us to come every day to watch the water we almost never go near in the garden running through this orchard! The fountain runs for outsiders, the stream flows here for us. It is true that I have merged with it the water from the public spout which used to run down to the lake along the main road which it rutted to the prejudice of travellers and at an utter

waste for everyone. It used to bend at the foot of the orchard between two rows of willows; I have integrated them into my enclosure and I bring the same water here via different paths.

I saw then that it had merely been a matter of making the water meander efficiently, by dividing and reuniting it as needed, attenuating the slope as much as possible, to extend the circuit and allow for the babble of a few small waterfalls. The bed of the streams was made up of a layer of clay, covered with an inch of pebbles from the lake and scattered with shells. These same streams running intermittently under a few large tiles covered over with earth and grass at ground level formed where they emerged an equal number of artificial springs. A few trickles rose from them through syphons over rugged patches and bubbled as they fell back. And so the soil thus constantly refreshed and moistened yielded forth new flowers and kept the grass always verdant and lovely.

The more I roamed through this agreeable sanctuary, the more I felt increasing the delightful sensation I had experienced upon entering; yet curiosity kept me expectant. I was more eager to see objects than to examine their impressions, and I was happy to abandon myself to that enchanting sight without taking the trouble to think; but Madame de Wolmar drawing me out of my reverie told me as she took my arm: everything you see is only nature vegetable and inanimate which, whatever one tries, always leaves behind an impression of solitude which is saddening. Come and see nature animate and sensate. There every moment of the day you will discover in it some new beauty. You anticipate me, I told her, I can hear noisy and indistinct chirping, and I can see rather few birds; I gather you have an aviary. It is true, she said, let's go closer. I dared not say yet what I thought of the aviary; but this thought had something about it that displeased me, and to me did not seem to go with the rest.

We went down via a thousand twists and turns to the bottom of the orchard where I found all the water gathered into a lovely brook flowing gently between two rows of old willows that had often been pruned. The hollows in their half-bald crowns[87] formed something like vases from which, thanks to the clever contrivance I mentioned, sprang tufts of honeysuckle, some of them wrapped around the branches, the others falling gracefully along the brook. At almost the far end of the enclosure was a small basin lined with grasses, rushes, reeds, serving as a trough to the aviary, and the last stop of this so precious and so well-managed water.

Beyond this basin was an esplanade ending at the corner of the enclosure in a mound covered with a multitude of shrubs of all kinds, the smaller ones toward the top and constantly increasing in size as the ground dropped lower; which made the level of their tops almost horizontal, or at

least made it clear that someday it would be. On the nearer side were a dozen trees still young but destined to become large, such as beech, elm, ash, acacia. It was the woods of this slope that served as a sanctuary to the multitude of birds whose chirping I had heard from a distance, and it was in the shade of this foliage as under a great parasol that one could see them flitting, running, singing, spatting, feuding as if they had not noticed us. So little did they flee as we approached, that following my preconceived notion, I thought at first they were closed in by a latticework: but when we reached the edge of the basin, I saw several of them fly down and come near to us on a sort of short alley that divided the esplanade in two and led from the basin to the aviary. Then Monsieur de Wolmar, coming around the basin, strewed on the alley two or three handfuls of mixed seed which he had in his pocket, and when he had withdrawn, the birds rushed in and started to eat like hens, in such a familiar way that I could see they were accustomed to this routine. That is enchanting! I cried out: The word aviary had surprised me coming from you[88]; but now I understand it: I see that you want guests and not prisoners. Who are you calling guests? answered Julie. It is we who are theirs. They are the masters here, and we pay them tribute so they will put up with us occasionally. Very well, I replied; but how did these masters take possession of the site? How do you go about gathering so many willing inhabitants? I have not heard that anything like this had ever been attempted, and I would not have believed it could be achieved, had I not the proof in front of me.

Patience and time, said Monsieur de Wolmar, have performed this miracle. These expedients are hardly likely to occur to the wealthy in their pleasures. Forever in a hurry to satisfy themselves, force and money are the only means they know; they have birds in cages, and friends at so much a month. If house staff ever came near this place, you would soon see the birds disappear, and if there is at present a large number of them here, that is because there always were a few. You cannot make them come when there are none, but it is easy when there are some to attract more by anticipating their needs, never frightening them, letting them brood in safety and never turning the small ones out of the nest; for that way those that are there remain, and those that drop in also remain. This wood existed, although it was separated from the orchard; all Julie did was to enclose it in a quickset hedge, remove the one that separated them, expand it and embellish it with new seedlings. You see to the right and left of the alley that leads to it two clearings covered with a random mixture of grasses, straw, and all sorts of plants. Every year she has wheat sown there, millet, sunflower, hemp, *pesettes*,* generally all the seeds birds like, and none is

* Vetch.

harvested. Besides that almost every day, summer and winter, she or I come and feed them, and when we fail Fanchon usually does it for us; they have water four paces off, as you see. Madame de Wolmar tends to them to the point of furnishing them every spring with little piles of horsehair, straw, wool, moss, and other stuff suitable for nest building. With the proximity of these materials, the abundance of food, and the great care we take to keep all their enemies away,* the perpetual peace they enjoy induces them to nest in a convenient place where they want for nothing, where no one disturbs them. In such a way the fathers' fatherland is also that of the children, and the colony is maintained and multiplied.

Ah, said Julie, there is nothing more for you to see! At this point each of them is attending only to himself; but inseparable spouses, the zeal for domestic chores, a father's and mother's tenderness, all that is lost for you. You should have been here two months ago to feast your eyes on nature's most enchanting spectacle and your heart on her sweetest sentiment. Madame, I replied rather sadly, you are a wife and mother; these are pleasures that are yours to know. At that moment Monsieur de Wolmar taking me by the hand and pressing it said to me: You have friends, and these friends have children; how could a father's affection be foreign to you? I looked at him, I looked at Julie, both looked at each other and returned to me a look so moving that embracing them first one and then the other I said to them tenderly: they are as dear to me as they are to you. I know not by what strange effect a word can thus alter a soul, but since that moment, Monsieur de Wolmar is to me a different man, and I see in him less the husband of the woman I have so loved than the father of two children for whom I would give my life.

I meant to walk round the basin to go see this enchanting sanctuary and its little occupants closer up; but Madame de Wolmar held me back. No one, she told me, intrudes on them in their domicile, and you are even the first of our guests I have brought this far. There are four keys to this orchard of which my father and we each have one: Fanchon has the fourth as inspectress and to bring my children here occasionally; a favor we enhance by the extreme circumspection we exact of them while they are here. Gustin himself never enters here without one of the four; and even then after two months in spring are past during which his labors are useful he scarcely comes any more, and all the rest is done by us. Thus, I said to her, lest your birds be your slaves you have become theirs. Now that, she replied, is what a tyrant would say, who thinks he is enjoying his freedom only insofar as it disturbs that of others.

* Dormice, mice, owls, and especially children.

As we were leaving to go back, Monsieur de Wolmar tossed a handful of barley into the basin, and when I looked I saw several small fishes. Aha! I immediately said, are these not prisoners? Yes, he said, they are prisoners of war, whose life we have spared. Indeed, added his wife. Some time ago Fanchon stole some small perch from the kitchen which she brought here unbeknownst to me. I leave them here, for fear of mortifying her if I sent them back to the lake; for it is still better to lodge fish in rather tight quarters than to offend an honest person. You are right, I replied, and this one is not to be pitied for having escaped the frying pan at that price.

Well then, what do you think, she asked me on the way back. Are you still at the ends of the earth? No, said I, at this point I am utterly outside it, and you have indeed transported me into Elysium.[89] The pompous name she has given the orchard, said Monsieur de Wolmar, certainly deserves this teasing. Grant moderate praise to childish games, and remember that they have never infringed on the materfamilias's duties. I know, I replied, I am very sure of it, and childish games please me more in this domain than men's labors.

Yet, I continued, there is something here I cannot understand. It is that a place so different from what it was could have become what it is only through cultivation and upkeep; yet nowhere do I see the slightest trace of cultivation. Everything is verdant, fresh, vigorous, and the gardener's hand is not to be seen: nothing belies the idea of a desert Island which came to my mind as I entered, and I see no human footprints.[90] Ah! said Monsieur de Wolmar, that is because we have taken great care to erase them. I have often been witness, sometimes accomplice to the trickery. We have hay sown on all the spots that have been plowed, and the grass soon hides the traces of labor; in the winter we have the thin and arid places covered with several beds of manure, the manure eats up the moss, revives the grass and plants; the trees themselves are no worse off for it, and by summer none of this is visible. As for the moss covering several of the alleys, it was Milord Edward who sent us from England the secret for making it grow.[91] These two sides, he continued, were enclosed by walls; the walls have been masked, not with espaliers, but with thick bushes that make the confines of the place look like the outer edge of a wood. The two other sides are dominated by strong quickset hedges, well furnished in maple, hawthorn, holly, privet, and a variety of other bushes that make them look not so much like hedges as underbrush. You see nothing here that is aligned, nothing levelled; never did the line[92] enter this place; nature never uses a line in its plantings[93]; the windings in their feigned irregularity are arranged with art to extend the footpath, hide the edges of the

Island, and enlarge its apparent size, without creating inconvenient or too frequent detours.*[94]

As I considered all this, I found it rather strange that they should take such pains to hide from themselves those they had taken; were it not better to have taken none at all? Despite all we have told you, Julie replied, you are gauging the labor from the effect, and you are mistaken. Everything you see is wild and robust plants; it's enough to put in the ground, and they grow on their own. Moreover, nature seems to want to veil from men's eyes her true attractions, to which they are too insensible, and which they disfigure when they can get their hands on them[95]: she flees much-frequented places; it is on the tops of mountains, deep in the forests, on desert Islands that she deploys her most stirring charms. Those who love her and cannot go so far to find her are reduced to doing her violence, forcing her in a way to come and live with them, and all this cannot be done without a modicum of illusion.

At these words a fancy came to me that made them laugh. I imagine, I said, a rich man from Paris or London, master of this house and accompanied by an architect dearly paid to spoil nature. With what disdain he would enter this simple, paltry place! with what contempt he would have all these tatters ripped out! The fine lines he would have traced! The fine avenues he would have cleared! The fine pattes-d'oie,[96] the fine trees like parasols, like fans! The fine well-sculptured trellis-works! The fine well-designed, well-squared, well-rounded bowers! The fine round, square, notched, oval greens of fine grass from England! The fine Yews pruned to look like dragons, pagods, marmosets, all sorts of monsters![97] The fine bronze vases, the fine stone fruits he will use to decorate his garden!....**[98] When all of that has been executed, said Monsieur de Wolmar, he will have made a very fine place where hardly anyone will go, and which one will always leave readily to go into the countryside, a gloomy place where no one will walk, but pass through on their way to take a walk; whereas during my rounds in the fields, I often hurry home to come for a walk here.[99]

I can see in those vast and richly decorated plots merely the vanity of the owner and the artist who, ever eager to display, the one his wealth and the other his talent, prepare boredom at great expense for whoever wants to enjoy their creation. A false taste of grandeur not made for man poisons his

* Thus they are not like those little groves now in fashion, so ridiculously contorted that you are always walking a zigzag, and have to pirouette at every step.

** I am persuaded that the time is approaching when people will want nothing in their gardens that is found in the countryside; they will suffer neither plants, nor bushes; they will want only porcelain flowers, magots, trellises, sand of every color, and fine vases full of nothing.

pleasures. The grand manner is always sad; it is a reminder of the wretchedness of the one who affects it. In the midst of his lawns and his grand avenues his little person does not become greater; a twenty-foot tree covers him as well as one of sixty*; he never takes up more than three feet of space, and loses himself like a mite[100] amidst his immense possessions.

There is another taste directly opposed to this one, and even more ridiculous, in that it does not even afford the pleasures of a walk for which gardens are intended. I see, said I; it is the taste of those curious little people, those little flower connoisseurs who swoon at the sight of a ranunculus, and bow down before tulips. Thereupon, I related to them, Milord, what once befell me in London in a certain flower garden we were so pretentiously shown, and in which we saw all the treasures of Holland shining so pompously on four beds of manure. I did not omit the parasol ceremony and the little baton with which I, unworthy, was honored, as well as the other spectators. I humbly confessed to them how having wished to outdo myself in turn, and attempt to wax ecstatic at the sight of a tulip that to me appeared bright in color and elegant in form, I was mocked, decried, hissed by all the Knowledgeables, and how the professor of the garden, progressing from contempt of the flower to contempt of the panegyrist, never deigned set eyes on me again during the entire session. I think, I added, that he dearly regretted having profaned his baton and parasol.[101]

This taste, said Monsieur de Wolmar, when it degenerates into mania is petty and vain in a way that makes it puerile and ridiculously costly. The other, at least, has some nobility, some grandeur and some sort of truth; but what is the value of a set or a bulb that an insect is perhaps gnawing or destroying at the moment you are buying it, of a flower precious at noon and withered before sunset: what is a conventional beauty that is perceptible only to the eyes of collectors, and that is a beauty only because such is their pleasure? The time may come when people will seek in flowers exactly the opposite of what they seek today, and with as much reason; then you in turn will be the learned one and your collector the ignorant one. All these petty observations that degenerate into study are unsuited to the reasonable man who wishes to afford his body a moderate exercise, or rest his

* He really should dwell a little more on the bad taste of ridiculously pruning trees, to make them rise into the clouds, by removing their fine crowns, their shade, by draining their sap, and preventing them from flourishing. This method it is true provides the gardeners with some wood: but it takes wood away from the country, which already has too little. You would think nature was made differently in France than in the rest of the world, so much care is put into disfiguring it. Parks there are planted only in long poles; they are forests of masts or may-poles, and one can walk in the middle of the woods without finding any shade.

mind strolling and conversing with his friends. Flowers are made to entertain our eyes in passing, and not to be so expertly anatomized.*[102] Behold their Meadowsweet shining everywhere in this orchard. Its fragrance fills the air; it delights the eye, and requires almost no attention or cultivation. That is why flower connoisseurs scorn it; nature has made it so beautiful that they can add on no conventional beauties, and being unable to put themselves to the torment of cultivating it, they find nothing in it to flatter them. The mistake of so-called people of taste is to want art everywhere, and never to be satisfied unless art is apparent; whereas true taste consists in hiding art; especially where the works of nature are concerned. What is the meaning of those avenues so straight and so sandy, which are to be found everywhere; and those stars[103] by which, far from extending the breadth of a park to the eye, as they imagine, they only manage awkwardly to show its confines? Does one see river sand in the woods, or does the foot rest more gently on that sand than on moss or grass? Does nature constantly employ the square and ruler? are they afraid she will somehow be recognized despite their efforts to disfigure her? Finally is it not amusing that, as if they were already weary of the walk when they set out, they affect to take it in a straight line so as to reach the end more quickly? Would you not say that by taking the shortest distance they travel rather than stroll, and want to get it over with the minute they have started?

What then will a man of taste do who lives to live, knows how to enjoy his own being, seeks true and simple pleasures, and wishes to create a footpath for himself at his doorstep? He will make it so convenient and agreeable that he can find contentment there at every hour of the day, and yet so simple and natural that he seems to have made nothing. He will combine water, greenery, shade, and coolness; for nature too combines all these things. He will allow no symmetry; it is the enemy of nature and variety, and all the avenues of an ordinary garden are so much alike that you think you are always in the same one. He will clear the ground so he can walk on it comfortably; but the two sides of his alleys will not always be exactly parallel; their direction will not always be perfectly straight; there will always be something irregular about it like the gait of an idle man who wanders when he strolls; he will not worry about opening fine perspectives in the distance. The taste for vistas and distant views comes from the inclination of most men for being content only elsewhere than where they are. They forever crave what is far away, and the artist who does not know how to make them sufficiently satisfied with what surrounds them, allows him-

* The wise Wolmar had not thought about it very carefully. Was he, who knew so well how to observe men, such a poor observer of nature? Was he unaware that if its Author is great in great things, he is very great in small things?

self that resource to amuse them; but the man of whom I speak does not have this worry, and when he is well-off where he is, he does not care about being elsewhere. Here for example, one does not see beyond the site, and one is quite content not to. One would willingly believe that all the charms of nature are enclosed herein, and I would be quite fearful lest the slightest opening of vista to the outside deprive this footpath of much of its attraction.*[104] Certainly any man who did not wish to spend the finest days in such a simple and agreeable place possesses neither pure taste nor a sound soul. I admit that we must not ceremoniously bring strangers here; but on the other hand we can take pleasure in it ourselves, without showing it to anyone.

Monsieur, I said to him, those very rich people who make very fine gardens have quite good reasons for being little disposed to walking alone, or to finding themselves face to face with themselves; thus they do very well in this to think only of others. Moreover, in China I saw gardens such as you are calling for, and done with such art that the art was invisible, but in so expensive a manner and maintained at such great cost that this thought took away all the pleasure I could have derived from beholding them. There were rocks, grottoes, artificial waterfalls in flat and sandy places where only well water is to be had; there were flowers and rare plants from every climate of China and Tartary[105] combined and raised in a single soil. It is true one saw there neither lovely avenues nor regular compartments; but one saw piled up in profusion marvels that can only be found dispersed and separate. Nature there appeared in a thousand different guises, and the whole taken together was not natural. Here they have hauled in neither soil nor rocks, created neither pumps nor reservoirs, they need no hothouses nor stoves, neither cloches nor matting. A fairly even terrain has received very simple ornamentation. Common grasses, common shrubs, a few trickles of water flowing without frills, without ducts have been enough to embellish it. It plays effortlessly, its freedom affording the viewer a new pleasure. I feel this site could be even more agreeable and please me infinitely less. Such for example is Milord Cobham's celebrated park at Staw.[106] It is a composite of very fine and picturesque places modelled after differ-

* I do not know whether one has ever attempted to give the long avenues of a star a slight curve, so that the eye could not follow each avenue all the way to the end, and the opposite extremity would be hidden from the viewer. One would, it is true, lose the attraction of the vistas; but one would gain the advantage so dear to landowners, of enlarging for the imagination the place where one stands, and in the middle of a star thus bounded one would feel lost in an immense park. I am persuaded that strolling there would also be less boring although more solitary; for everything that gives purchase to the imagination stimulates ideas and nourishes the mind; but gardening enthusiasts are not the type to feel such things. How many times in a rustic place would the pencil fall from their hands, as it did from Le Nôtre's in St. James Park, if they knew as he did what gives life to nature, and interest to its spectacle?

ent countries, and it all looks natural except the combination, as in the Chinese gardens which I just mentioned. The master and creator of this superb seclusion even had ruins, temples, ancient edifices constructed there, and eras like locations are combined with a more than human magnificence.[107] That is precisely my objection. I would like for men's amusements always to have a facile appearance that would not remind one of their frailty, and for one's imagination, in admiring these marvels, not to be burdened with the sums and labors they have cost. Does fate not give us enough pains without our putting more into our very diversions?

I have but one criticism to make about your Elysium, I added looking at Julie, but to you it will seem serious: that it is a superfluous amusement. What was the point of making yourself a new footpath, when on the other side of the house you had such charming and neglected bowers?[108] It is true, she said with some embarrassment, but I like this one better. If you had really considered your question before you asked it, interrupted Monsieur de Wolmar, it would be more than indiscreet. Never has my wife since her marriage set foot in the bowers of which you speak. I know the reason, although she has always kept it from me. You who are not ignorant of it, learn to respect the ground you tread; it is planted by the hands of virtue.

Scarcely had I received this just reprimand than the little family led by Fanchon entered as we were on our way out. These three lovable children threw their arms around Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar's necks. I received my share of their little caresses. Julie and I went back into the Elysium to accompany them for a few steps; then we joined Monsieur de Wolmar who was talking with some workers. Along the way she told me that once she became a mother, a thought occurred to her about that footpath which had increased her zeal for improving it. I thought, she said, about my children's amusement and health when they are older. The upkeep of this place requires more attention than effort; it is more a matter of giving a certain shape to the plants' branches than of spading and tilling the soil; I want them one day to become my little gardeners: they will have as much exercise as they need to fortify their temperament,[109] and not enough to fatigue it. Besides, they will have done for them what is too strenuous for their age and will limit themselves to the work that amuses them. I cannot tell you, she added, how satisfying to me it is to picture my children busy returning to me the small attentions I take with such pleasure for them, and the joy of their tender hearts at seeing their mother go walking with delight in shade fashioned by their hands. In truth, my friend, she said her voice quavering, days thus spent are akin to the happiness of the afterlife, and it is not for nothing that in thinking about that I

have given this place in advance the name Elysium.[110] Milord, this incomparable woman is mother as she is wife, as she is friend, as she is daughter, and to my heart's everlasting torture so it is too that she was lover.

In my enthusiasm over so enchanting a site, I entreated them come evening to allow Fanchon to entrust me with her key and the duty of feeding the birds for the duration of my stay with them. Julie at once sent the seed bag to my room and gave me her own key. I do not know why I accepted it with some disappointment: it seemed to me I would rather have had Monsieur de Wolmar's.

This morning I arose early, and with a childish eagerness went off to lock myself into the desert Island. What agreeable thoughts I hoped to take with me into this solitary place where the sweet sight of nature alone would banish from my memory all this social and factitious order that has made me so unhappy. My entire surroundings will be the handiwork of her whom I so cherished. I shall behold her all about me. I shall see nothing that her hand has not touched; I shall kiss flowers on which her feet have trod; I shall breathe with the dew an air she has breathed; the taste displayed in her diversions will make all her charms present to me, and I shall find her everywhere as she is deep in my heart.

As I entered the Elysium in this frame of mind, I suddenly recalled the last word that Monsieur de Wolmar said to me yesterday in about the same place. The memory of that single word changed at once the whole state of my soul. I imagined I was seeing the image of virtue where I was seeking that of pleasure. This image merged in my mind with the features of Madame de Wolmar, and for the first time since my return I saw Julie in her absence, not such as she was for me and as I still like to picture her, but such as she appears every day before my eyes. Milord, I seemed to see that woman, so charming, so chaste and so virtuous, in the midst of that same train that surrounded her yesterday. Around her I saw her three lovable children, the honorable and precious token of conjugal union and tender friendship, giving to and receiving from her a thousand tender caresses. By her side I saw the solemn Wolmar, that Husband so cherished, so happy, so worthy of it. I seemed to see his penetrating and judicious eye piercing to the depths of my heart and again making me ashamed of it; I seemed to hear issuing from his mouth reproaches too well deserved, and lessons too ill heeded. Following her I saw that same Fanchon Regard, living proof of the triumph of virtues and humanity over the most ardent love. Ah! What evil sentiment could have reached her through this inviolable escort? With what indignation I would have stifled the vile transports of a criminal and ill-extinguished passion, and how I would have scorned myself for soiling with a single sigh so ravishing a tableau of innocence and honesty! I went

over in memory the things she had said to me as we were leaving; then returning with her into a future she envisages with such charms, I saw that tender mother mopping the sweat from her children's brow, kissing their ruddy cheeks, and abandoning that heart made for love to nature's sweetest sentiment. Even that very name Elysium called to order the aberrations of my imagination, and brought to my soul a calm preferable to the agitation of the most seductive passions. It depicted for me in some sense the inner thoughts of her who had found it; it seemed to me that with a troubled conscience one would never have chosen that name. I said to myself, peace reigns in the depths of her heart as it does in the sanctuary she has named.

I had promised myself an agreeable reverie; I have mused more agreeably than I had expected. I have spent two hours in the Elysium which I would not trade for any other time in my life. Seeing with what charm and what rapidity they had gone by,[111] I found that there is in the meditation of honest thoughts a sort of well-being that the wicked have never known; it is to enjoy being alone with oneself. If one thought about it without preconceptions, I do not know what other pleasure one could compare to that. I sense at least that whoever loves solitude as much as I do must fear the torments it has in store for him. Perhaps one could deduce from the same principles the key to men's false conclusions concerning the advantages of vice and of virtue. For the enjoyment of virtue is a wholly inner one and is perceptible only to him who feels it: but all the advantages of vice are visible to others, and only he who has them knows at what price.

Se a ciascun l'interno affanno
Si leggesse in fronte scritto,
Quanti mai, che invidia fanno,
*Ci farebbero pietà?**[112]

If it were possible to read
internal pain in the face,
how many whom we now envy
would we then pity?

As it was getting late without my noticing, Monsieur de Wolmar came to join me and inform me that Julie and tea awaited me. It is you, I told

* He could have added the sequel which is very beautiful, and no less suited to the subject.

Si vedria che i lor nemici
Anno in seno, e si riduce
Nel parere a noi felici
Ogni lor felicità.

One could then see that they have
their enemies within their breast,
and their happiness is nothing more
than a happy appearance.

them by way of apology, who kept me from being with you: I was so enchanted with my previous evening that I went back to enjoy it this morning; fortunately there is no harm done and since you have waited for me, my morning is not wasted. That is very well put, Madame de Wolmar answered; it would be better to await each other until noon than to lose the pleasure of breakfasting together. Outsiders are never admitted to my room in the morning and have breakfast in their own. Breakfast is the meal of friends; the house staff are excluded, the unwanted do not intrude; we say everything we think, we reveal all our secrets, we constrain none of our sentiments; there we can give in without imprudence to the satisfactions of confidence and intimacy. It is practically the only moment when we are permitted to be what we are; would it could last all day! Ah Julie! I was about to say; now there is a selfish wish! But I kept silent. The first thing I have suppressed along with love is praise. Is praising someone face to face, unless it be one's mistress, anything other than an imputation of vanity? You know, Milord, whether it is against Madame de Wolmar that this reproach can be levelled. No, no; I honor her too much not to honor her in silence. To see her, to hear her, to observe her conduct, is this not praising her enough?

LETTER XII

From Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe

It is written, dear friend, that you must be at all times my safeguard against myself, and that after delivering me with such efforts from the pitfalls of my heart, you shall further secure me from those of my reason. After so many cruel trials, I am learning to dread errors as I do the passions from which they so often result. Would I had always taken the same precaution! If in times past I had depended less on my insights, I would have had less cause to be ashamed of my sentiments.

Let not this preamble alarm you. I would be unworthy of your friendship if I were yet to consult it on grave matters. Crime was always foreign to my heart, and I dare believe it is further removed than ever. Listen to me patiently then, my Cousin, and believe that I will never need advice with respect to doubts that honesty alone can resolve.

In the six years I have lived with Monsieur de Wolmar in as perfect a union as can exist between two spouses, you know that he has never spoken to me of his family nor of his person, and that having accepted him from a father as jealous of his daughter's happiness as of his house's honor, I have not shown any eagerness to know more about him than he found

suitable to tell. Content to owe him, with the life of him who gave me mine, my honor, my peace of mind, my reason, my children, and everything that can give me some value in my own eyes, I was well assured that what I did not know about him did not belie what I did, and I had no need to know more in order to love him, admire him, honor him as much as was in my power.

This morning during breakfast he proposed to us a bit of a walk before the heat of the day; then under the pretext, he said, of not running about the countryside in our dressing-gowns, he led us into the bowers, and precisely, my dear, into that very bower where all the misfortunes of my life began. As we neared that fatal place, I felt my heart pound terribly, and I would have refused to go in had shame not prevented me, and had the memory of something said the other day in the Elysium not led me to fear interpretations. I do not know whether the philosopher was more collected; but having some moments later turned my eyes by chance toward him, I found him pale, changed, and I cannot tell you what pain all that caused me.

As we entered the bower I saw my husband glance at me and smile. He sat down between us, and after a moment of silence, taking us both by the hand, my children, he said to us, I am beginning to see that my plans will not be in vain and that all three of us can be joined by a durable attachment, one that can make for our common happiness, and for my consolation in the infirmities of an old age that is approaching: but I know you both better than you know me; it is fair to make everything equal, and although I have nothing particularly interesting to reveal to you, since you have no more secrets from me, I wish to have no more from you.

Then he revealed to us the secret of his birth which heretofore had been known only to my father. When you learn it, you will gauge how far the self-control and moderation of a man go who was capable of keeping such a secret from his wife for six years; but this secret is nothing to him, and he thinks too little about it to make a great effort not to bring it up.[113]

I will not detain you, he said, over the events of my life; what may matter to you is less to know my adventures than my character. They like it are simple, and knowing well what I am you will easily understand what I have been able to do. I have naturally a tranquil soul and a cold heart. I am one of those men whom people think they truly insult by saying they feel nothing; that is, they have no passion that turns them aside from following man's true guide. Little sensible to pleasure and pain, I even experience but weakly that sentiment of interest and humanity that causes us to assimilate the affections of others. If I am pained when I see good people

suffer, pity has nothing to do with it, for I feel none when I see the wicked suffer. My only active principle is a natural taste for order, and the right concurrence of the play of fortune and of men's acts pleases me exactly like a beautiful symmetry in a tableau, or like a well-contrived play in the theater. If I have any ruling passion it is that of observation. I like to read what is in men's hearts; as my own little deludes me, as I observe composedly and disinterestedly, and as long experience has given me some sagacity, I scarcely err in my judgments; and that is the whole compensation for †self-love[114] in my continual studies; for I do not like playing a role, but only seeing others perform. I enjoy observing society, not taking part in it. If I could change the nature of my being and become a living eye, I would gladly make that exchange. Thus my indifference for men does not make me independent of them; though I care not about being seen, I need to see them, and though I do not cherish them I find them necessary.

The first two stations of society which I had occasion to observe were courtiers and valets; two orders of men less different in fact than in appearance and so unworthy of study, so easy to know, that I was tired of them from the first glance. By leaving the court where everything is instantly perceived, I evaded unbeknownst to me the peril that awaited me there and which I would not have escaped. I changed my name, and wishing to acquaint myself with the military, I went off to seek service with a foreign Prince; that is how I had the good fortune to be useful to your father whom the despair for having killed his friend impelled to expose himself rashly and against his duty. The sensible and grateful heart of this valiant officer immediately began to give me a better opinion of mankind. He attached himself to me with a friendship to which it was impossible for me to refuse mine, and we never since that time ceased to maintain a relationship which became more solid with each day. I learned in my new position that interest is not, as I had believed, the only motive of human acts and that among the flocks of prejudices that combat virtue, there are also some that favor it. I understood that the general character of man is a †self-love which as such is indifferent, good or bad through the accidents that modify it and that depend upon customs, laws, ranks, fortune, and our whole human system.[115] I gave in therefore to my inclination, and, disdaining vain opinion with respect to positions, I launched in turn into the various stations that could help me compare them all and know the ones by the others. I sensed, as you remarked in some Letter, he said to St. Preux, that we see nothing if we do nothing but look, that we must act ourselves to see men act,[116] and I made of myself an actor in order to be a spectator. It is always easy to descend: I tried out a multitude of positions that had

never occurred to a man of my station. I even became a peasant, and when Julie made me into a garden boy, she did not find me such a novice in the trade as she might have anticipated.[117]

With true knowledge of men, of which idle philosophy gives a mere semblance, I found another advantage which I had not expected. It was to heighten through an active life that love of order which I have received from nature, and acquire a new taste for the good through the pleasure of contributing to it. This sentiment made me a little less contemplative, put me a little more at one with myself, and through a rather natural consequence of this progression, I perceived that I was alone. The loneliness that always afflicted me was becoming painfully acute, and I could no longer hope to ignore it for long. Though I had not lost my coldness I needed an attachment; the perspective of decline without someone to comfort me grieved me before my time, and, for the first time in my life, I knew anxiety and sadness. I discussed my distress with the Baron d'Étange. You must not, he said, grow old single. I myself, after living nearly independently within the bonds of wedlock, sense that I need to become a husband and father again, and I am going to retire into the bosom of my family. It is within your power to make it yours and give me back the son I have lost. I have an only daughter to marry; she is not without merit; she has a sensible heart, and her love for her duty makes her love everything that relates to it. She is neither a beauty, nor a prodigy of mind: but come see her, and take my word that if you feel nothing for her, you will never feel anything for anyone on earth. I came, I saw you, Julie, and I found that your father had been modest in his description of you. Your transports, your tears of joy when you embraced him, gave me the first or rather the only emotion I have experienced in my life. Though this impression was slight, it was unique, and in order to act the sentiments require strength only in proportion to those that oppose them. Three years' absence did not change the state of my heart. The state of yours did not escape me on my return, and it is at this point I must avenge you for a confession that cost you so. Imagine, my dear, with what strange surprise I then learned that all my secrets had been revealed to him before my marriage, and that he had married me although he was not unaware that I belonged to another.

This conduct was inexcusable, Monsieur de Wolmar continued. I was offending delicacy; I was sinning against prudence; I was risking your honor and mine; I should have feared plunging us both into irremediable sorrows: but I loved you, and loved only you. Nothing else mattered to me. How to repress even the weakest passion, when there is no counterweight to it? Therein lies the disadvantage of cold and impassive charac-

ters. Everything is fine so long as their coldness protects them from temptations; but should one appear and hit them, they are defeated as quickly as they are attacked, and reason, which governs while it is alone, never has the strength to defend against the slightest assault. I have never been tempted but once, and I succumbed. If the intoxication of some other passion had made me vacillate further, I would have fallen every time I stumbled: only fiery souls know how to fight and win. All great struggles, all sublime acts are their doing; cold reason has never accomplished anything illustrious, and passions are overcome only by being set against each other. When the passion of virtue arises, it alone rules and keeps everything in balance; that is how the true sage is made, who no more than any other is immune from the passions, but alone is able to overcome them through their own means, as a pilot sails forward using contrary winds.

You see that I do not pretend to extenuate my fault; if it had been one I would unfailingly have committed it; but, Julie, I knew you and committed none in marrying you. I sensed that on you alone depended all the happiness I could enjoy, and that if there was someone who could make you happy, it was I. I knew that your heart required innocence and peace, that the love that preoccupied it would never provide them, and that nothing short of the horror of crime could rid it of love. I saw that your soul was in a despondency from which it could emerge only through another struggle, and that only by appreciating how worthy of esteem you still could be would you learn to become so.

Your heart was used up for love; therefore I counted for nothing a disproportion of ages that nullified any right of mine to pretend to a sentiment which he who was its object could never enjoy, and impossible for any other to obtain. On the contrary, seeing that in a life more than half over a single taste had made itself felt to me, I surmised that it would endure and was happy to devote to it the rest of my days. In my long quests I had found nothing to equal you, I thought that what you could not accomplish, no other woman on earth could; I dared to believe in virtue and I wed you. Your secretiveness toward me did not surprise me; I knew the reasons for it, and I saw in your good behavior the reason for its duration. Out of consideration for you I imitated your reserve, and did not wish to deprive you of the honor of making to me one day on your own a confession I could see at every moment on the tip of your tongue. In no way was I mistaken; you have kept all I had promised myself from you. When I went to select a wife, I desired to have in her an amiable, virtuous, happy companion. The first two conditions are fulfilled. My child, I hope we will not find the third lacking.

At these words, despite all my efforts not to interrupt him other than by

my tears, I could not help throwing my arms around his neck, crying out: My dear husband! O the best and most beloved of men! teach me what is lacking to my happiness, unless it be yours, and that it be better deserved.... Your happiness is as great as it can be, he said interrupting me; you deserve it; but it is time to enjoy in peace a happiness which up until now has cost you many precautions. If your fidelity had been all I required, everything was accomplished the minute you vowed it; I meant, beyond that, to make it easy and agreeable for you, and we have both been busy making it so in concert without talking about it. Julie, we have succeeded; better than you think, perhaps. The only failing I find in you is your inability to regain the confidence you owe yourself, and your underestimation of your own worth. Excessive modesty has its dangers as does pride. Just as temerity that carries us beyond our resources renders them powerless, a trepidation that prevents us from relying on them renders them useless. Genuine prudence consists in understanding them thoroughly and remaining within them. You acquired new ones when you changed station. You are no longer that unfortunate maiden who deplored her weakness as she yielded to it; you are the most virtuous of wives, who knows no laws but those of duty and honor, and to whom the overly vivid memory of her faults is the only fault remaining to reproach her. Far from continuing to take insulting measures against yourself, you should learn to depend on yourself so you can go on doing so. Banish unjustified diffidence which can sometimes reawaken the sentiments that have produced it. Congratulate yourself rather on your wise choice of an honorable man at an age when a wrong one is so easy to make, and on your earlier taking a lover whom you can have today as friend under the very eyes of your husband. From the time I learned of your liaison I judged each of you in terms of the other. I saw what delusory fervor had led you both astray; it acts only on beautiful souls; it sometimes damns them, but does so with an attraction that seduces none but them. I surmised that the same attraction that had brought about your union would dissolve it the minute it became criminal, and that vice could enter into hearts like yours, but not take root.

From that moment I understood that there existed bonds between you that ought not to be broken; that your mutual attachment depended upon so many praiseworthy things, that one ought rather to regulate than destroy it; and that neither of you could forget the other without losing much of his own worth. I knew that great struggles only stir up great passions, and that if violent efforts exercise the soul, they cost torments that in the long run can crush it. I invoked Julie's gentleness to temper her austerity. I nurtured her friendship for you, he said to St. Preux; I took away

what excess remained, and I think I have preserved more of her own heart for you than perhaps she would have left you, if I had surrendered it to its own ways.

My success encouraged me, and I wished to attempt your cure as I had obtained hers; for I had high regard for you, and despite the prejudices of vice, I have always recognized that there was nothing good that could not be obtained from beautiful souls with confidence and straightforwardness. I have seen you, you have not deceived me; you will not deceive me; and although you are not yet what you must be, I see you better than you think and am better satisfied with you than you are with yourself. I well know that my conduct looks strange and flies in the face of all the common maxims; but maxims become less general as one reads hearts better, and Julie's husband must not conduct himself like another man. My children, he said in a voice all the more moving in that it came from a dispassionate man; be what you are, and we will all be content. Danger lies only in opinion; have no fear of yourselves and you will have nothing to fear; look only to the present and I answer for your future. I can tell you no more today; but if my plans come to fruition and my hope does not deceive me, our destinies will be better fulfilled and you will both be happier than if you had belonged to each other.

Rising, he embraced us, and would have us to embrace also, in this place.... in this very place where once.... Claire, oh good Claire, how dearly you have always loved me! I made no objection. Alas! how wrong I would have been to object! That kiss was nothing like the one that had made me so dread the bower. For this I sadly congratulated myself, and recognized that my heart was more changed than I had heretofore dared believe.

As we were about to head back to the house, my husband stopped me by the hand, and pointing to the bower we were leaving, he said to me with a laugh: Julie, fear this sanctuary no more; it has just been profaned. You don't want to believe me, Cousin, but I swear to you that he has some supernatural gift for reading what is in hearts: May Heaven let him ever keep it! With so much cause for despising me, it is doubtless to this art that I owe his indulgence.

You do not see yet any counsel to give; patience, my Angel, we are coming to it; but the conversation I have just reported was necessary for the elucidation of the rest.

On our way back, my husband, who has long been expected at Étange, told me that he was planning to leave tomorrow to go there, that he would see you on the way, and that he would remain there five or six days. Without saying all I thought about such an ill-timed departure, I pointed out

that it did not seem to me so indispensable as to oblige Monsieur de Wolmar to walk out on a guest he had himself invited into his house. Would you, he replied, have me do him the honors to let him know he is not at home? I am for the hospitality of the Valaisans. I hope he finds here their liberties and lets us have their freedom. Seeing that he refused to understand me, I took another approach and tried to prevail upon our guest to make this trip with him. You will discover, I told him, a site that has its beauties and even some of the kind you like; you will visit the my fathers' estate and mine; the interest you take in me does not allow me to think that seeing them will leave you indifferent. I had my mouth open to add that this château was much like Milord Edward's which.... but fortunately I had time to bite my tongue.[118] He answered me very simply that I was right and that he would do as I wished. But Monsieur de Wolmar, who apparently intended to push me to the limit, retorted that he should do as he himself wished. Which do you prefer, to come or to stay? To stay here, he said without hesitating. Well stay then, my husband replied, clasping his hand: honest and true man, I am very pleased with that word. There was no way to argue much over it in front of the third party who was listening. I kept my peace, and I was unable to hide my affliction enough for my husband not to notice it. How now, he responded with apparent displeasure, at a moment when St. Preux was at a distance from us, can it be I have futilely plead your cause against yourself, and can Madame de Wolmar be satisfied with a virtue that should have to choose its moments? For my part, I am harder to please; I want to owe my wife's fidelity to her heart and not to chance, and it is not enough for me that she keep her faith; I am offended that she doubts it.

Thereupon he led us into his study, where I was all but dumbfounded to see him take from a drawer, along with the copies of some of our friend's narratives I had given him,[119] the originals themselves of all the Letters I thought I had earlier seen Babi burn in my mother's room. There, he said to me as he showed them to us, are the foundations of my security; if they misled me, it would be folly to depend upon anything that men respect. I remit my wife and my honor in trust to her who, a maiden seduced, chose an act of benevolence over an exclusive and safe tryst. I commit Julie wife and mother to him who having it in his power to gratify his desires managed to respect Julie lover and daughter. Let whichever of you has such a poor opinion of himself to think I am wrong say so, and I shall instantly retract it. Cousin, do you think it was easy to venture a reply to such language?

Yet I sought a moment during the afternoon to take my husband aside, and without going into reasonings I had not the right to press very far, I

limited myself to asking him for two days' delay. They were granted right away; I am using them to send you this messenger and await your reply, to know what I should do.

I know full well that I have only to beg my husband not to leave at all, and he who never refused me anything will not refuse me so slight a favor. But, my dear, I see that he takes pleasure in the confidence he is evincing in me, and I fear I should lose some of his esteem, if he thinks I need more reserve than he allows me. I also know full well that I have only to say a word to St. Preux, and he will not hesitate to accompany him: but will my husband be so easily fooled, and can I act in this way without preserving over St. Preux an air of authority, which would seem to leave him in turn some sort of rights? Besides, I fear he will infer from this precaution that I feel it necessary, and this means, which at first appears the simplest, is perhaps ultimately the most dangerous. Finally I am not unaware that no consideration can be placed in the balance with a real danger; but does this danger exist in fact? That is precisely the doubt you must resolve.

The more I try to sound my soul's present state, the more I find in it to reassure me. My heart is pure, my conscience is easy, I feel neither turmoil nor fear, and in all that transpires within me, my sincerity toward my husband costs me no effort. Not that certain involuntary memories do not sometimes give me a moment of emotion to which it would be better to be immune; but far from these memories being produced by sight of him who has occasioned them, they seem to me more infrequent since his return, and however sweet it is to see him again, by I know not what strange turn thinking about him is sweeter. In a word, I find that I do not even require the support of virtue to be tranquil in his presence, and that the sentiments it has destroyed would be hard put to arise again even if horror of the crime did not exist.

But, my angel, is it enough for my heart to reassure me, when reason should alarm me? I have lost the right to depend upon myself. Who can promise me that my confidence is not again an illusion of vice? how can I trust sentiments that have so many times deluded me? Does crime not always begin with pride which makes one scorn temptation, and is braving perils in which one has succumbed not to wish to succumb once more?

Weigh all these considerations, my Cousin, you will see that even if they were vain in themselves, their object makes them serious enough to merit bearing them in mind. So help me out of the uncertainty they have placed me in. Show me how I must comport myself in this delicate situation; for my past errors have impaired my judgment, and make me hesitant about deciding anything. Whatever you may think of yourself, your soul is calm and tranquil, I am sure of that; objects are reflected in it as they

are; but mine ever moved confuses and disfigures them like a rippling wave. I no longer dare trust anything I see or feel, and despite such enduring regrets, I grieve to discover that the weight of a fault long past is a burden one must bear one's whole life long.

LETTER XIII

Reply

Poor Cousin! what torments you endlessly inflict on yourself with so many reasons for living in peace! All your troubles come from within, O Israel![120] If you followed your own rules; if in matters of sentiment you listened solely to the inner voice, and your heart silenced your reason, you would give in without scruple to the sense of security it inspires in you, and you would not attempt, against its testimony, to fear a peril that can come only from it.

I hear you, I hear you quite well, my Julie; surer of yourself than you pretend, you wish to humiliate yourself for your past faults under the pretext of preventing new ones, and your scruples are much less precautions for the future than a penalty inflicted on the temerity that earlier undid you. You compare the times; are you serious? Compare also the situations, and remember that I then chided you for your confidence, as I now do for your fears.

You are deluding yourself, my dear child; we do not so easily fool ourselves: although we can manage to forget our state by not thinking about it, we see it as it is the minute we turn our attention to it, and we no more fail to see our own virtues than our vices. Your meekness, your devoutness,[121] have given you an inclination to humility. Beware this dangerous virtue which only activates †pride by concentrating it, and believe that the noble candor of a righteous soul is preferable to the arrogance of the humble. If temperance is required in wisdom, it is equally required in the measures wisdom dictates; lest precautions degrading to virtue debase the soul, and make an imaginary danger into a reality therein by dint of alarming us about it. Do you not see that after arising again from a fall one must stand straight, and that to lean in the other direction from the fall, is the way to fall again? Cousin, you were a lover like Heloise, now you are devout like her; would to God it be with more success![122] In truth, if I were less familiar with your natural timidity, your terrors would be capable of frightening me in turn, and if I were as scrupulous, by dint of fearing for you, you would have me trembling for myself.

Think better on it, my sweet friend; you whose moral is as easy and

gentle as it is honest and pure, are you not putting a harshness too rugged and out of character into your maxims on the separation of the sexes? I concede with you that they must not live in company nor after the same fashion; but examine whether this important rule might not call for several distinctions in practice, whether it should be applied indiscriminately and without exception to married and unmarried women, to general society and to private interviews, to business and to entertainment, and whether the decency and honesty that motivate it ought not on occasion to temper it? Your desire is that in a land of good morals where in marriage one seeks natural affinities, there be gatherings where young people of the two sexes may see each other, get to know one another, and find their match; but with good reason you forbid them any private interviews. Should it not be entirely the opposite for wives and mothers who can have no legitimate interest in showing themselves in public, whom domestic cares retain inside their homes, and who there need avoid nothing that is becoming to a mistress of the house? I should not like to see you go down to have merchants taste your wines in your cellar, nor leave your children's side to go settle accounts with a banker; but if an honorable man comes along to see your husband, or deal with him on some matter, shall you in his absence refuse to receive his guest and do him the house honors, for fear of finding yourself alone in private with him? Go back to the principle and all the rules will be explained. Why do we think that wives should live withdrawn and separated from men? Shall we do our sex the insult of believing that this is for reasons derived from its frailty, and merely to avoid the danger of temptations? No, my dear, these unworthy fears do not suit a good woman, a materfamilias constantly surrounded with objects that sustain in her sentiments of honor, and devoted to nature's most respectable duties. What separates us from men, is nature itself which prescribes us different occupations[123]; it is that sweet and timid modesty which, although not having precisely to do with chastity, is its surest guardian; it is that attentive and provocative reserve which, fomenting in men's hearts both desires and respect, serves so to speak as virtue's coquetry. That is why couples themselves are not an exception to the rule. That is why the most honest wives in general keep the most sway over their husbands; because with the help of that wise and discrete reserve, without caprice or refusals, they know within the tenderest union the art of keeping them at a certain distance, and never let them become sated with them.[124] You will concede with me that your precept is too general not to entail exceptions, and that not being based upon a rigorous duty, the same decorum that founds it might sometimes allow an exemption.

The circumspection that you base on your past faults is insulting to

your present state; I would never forgive your heart for it, and it is very hard for me to forgive your reason. How did the rampart that defends your person fail to protect you from an ignominious fear? How is it that my Cousin, my sister, my friend, my Julie could confuse the weaknesses of an overly sensible maiden with the infidelities of a guilty wife? Look around you, you will see nothing that should not elevate and sustain your soul. Your husband who expects so much of it and whose esteem you have to justify; your children whom you want to bring up right and who will one day be proud to have you for their mother; your venerable father who is so dear to you, who derives happiness from your own and takes even more pride in his daughter than in his ancestors; your friend whose fate depends on yours and to whom you must account for a reform to which she has contributed; her daughter to whom you owe the example of the virtues you wish to instill in her; your friend, a hundred times more worshipful of your virtues than of your person, and who respects you even more than you dread him; you yourself, finally, whose good conduct is itself your reward for the efforts it has cost you, and who will never accept to lose in a moment the fruit of so much striving; how many reasons capable of sparking your courage shame you for daring to mistrust yourself! But to answer for my Julie, what need have I to consider what she is? It suffices me to know what she was during the errors she deplores. Ah! had your heart ever been capable of infidelity, I would allow you still to fear it: but at the very moment when you thought you could envisage it in some distant future, you can judge how it would have horrified you in the present, by looking at the horror it inspired in you[125] once merely to think about it would have meant committing it.

I remember the astonishment with which we used to learn that there are countries where the weakness of an enamored maiden is an irredeemable crime, although the adultery of a woman there bears the lovely name of gallantry, and where one openly seeks compensation once married for the short constraint in which one lived as a maiden. I know what maxims prevail on that subject in high society where virtue is nothing, where all is but sham appearance, where crimes are cancelled by the difficulty of proving them, where proof of them is itself ridiculous up against the custom that condones them. But you, Julie, oh you who burning with a pure and faithful flame were guilty in men's eyes alone, and had no reproach to fear between Heaven and you! you who commanded respect in the midst of your faults; you who a prey to futile regrets forced us still to worship the virtues you no longer had; you whom it angered to have to incur your own contempt, when everything seemed to make you excusable; dare you fear crime after paying so dearly for your weakness? Dare

you fear having less worth today than in those times that cost you so many tears? No, my dear, far from your former distractions needing to alarm you, they need to spark your courage; such mortifying repentance does not lead to remorse, and whoever is so sensible to shame is incapable of confronting infamy.

If ever a weak soul had supports against its weakness, it is those which you have available; if ever a strong soul was able to sustain itself, does yours need support? Tell me then what are the rational grounds for fear? Your whole life has been but a continual battle in which, even after your defeat, honor, duty have never ceased fighting and have finally triumphed. Ah Julie! shall I believe that after so many torments and pains, twelve years of tears and six years of glory[126] let you dread a one-week trial? Briefly stated, be sincere with yourself; if the peril exists, save your person and feel ashamed for your heart; if it does not exist, it is an outrage to your reason, a stigma to your virtue to fear a danger that cannot reach it. Don't you know there are dishonorable temptations that never came near an honest soul, that it is shameful even to triumph over them, and that to take precautions against them is not so much to humble as to abase oneself?

I do not pretend to give you my arguments as unexceptionable, but only to show you that there are some that go against yours, and this suffices to justify my opinion. Do not put faith either in yourself, who are unable to render yourself justice, or in me, who in your failings have never been able to see anything but your heart, and have always worshipped you; but in your husband who sees you as you are, and judges you exactly according to your merit. Hasty, like all sensible people, to think poorly of those who are not, I had misgivings about his insight into the secrets of tender hearts; but since our traveller's arrival, I see from what he writes me that he reads very well what is in yours, and that not one of the stirrings that occur therein escapes his observations. I even find them so fine and to the point that I have retreated almost to the extreme opposite of my first sentiment, and would readily accept that cold men who consult their eyes more than their heart gauge others' passions better than turbulent and impetuous or vain people like me, who always begin by putting themselves in others' places, and never manage to see anything but what they feel. However that may be, Monsieur de Wolmar knows you well, he respects, he loves you, and his fate is tied to yours. What does he lack for you to leave him in full control of your conduct about which you fear deluding yourself? Perhaps feeling old age approaching, he means through trials intended to reassure him to prevent the jealous anxiety that a young wife ordinarily inspires in an aged husband; perhaps his design requires that you be able to live on an intimate footing with your friend, without alarming

either your husband or yourself; perhaps he only wishes to give you a mark of confidence and esteem worthy of his for you. One must never hold back from such sentiments as if one could not bear their weight; and as for me, I think in a word that you cannot better satisfy prudence and modesty than by placing your complete faith in his tenderness and insight.

Would you like, without disobliging Monsieur de Wolmar, to punish yourself for a pride you never had, and prevent a danger that no longer exists? Once you are alone with the philosopher, take against him all the superfluous precautions that would formerly have been so needful; force yourself to the same reserve as if with your virtue you could still mistrust your heart and his. Avoid conversations that are too affectionate, tender memories of the past; interrupt or avoid too long sessions alone with him; surround yourself constantly with your children; remain seldom alone with him in your room, in the Elysium, in the bower despite its profanation. Above all take these measures in so natural a manner that they will seem an act of chance, and he cannot imagine for a moment that you fear him. You are fond of boat outings; you avoid them for the sake of your husband who is afraid of the water, for your children's whom you do not want to expose to it. Make use of this absence to afford yourself this amusement, leaving your children under Fanchon's watch. That is the way to give in without risk to the sweet outpourings of friendship, and peaceably enjoy being a long time alone with him under the protection of the Boatmen, who see without hearing, and from whom you cannot distance yourselves before thinking about what you are up to.

Another thought occurs to me that would make many people laugh, but will please you, I am sure; it is to keep during your husband's absence a faithful journal to be shown to him upon his return, and to bear the journal in mind during all the conversations that are to be entered. In truth, I do not believe such an expedient would be useful to many wives; but a soul that is candid and incapable of bad faith has many resources against vice which others will always lack. Nothing is to be eschewed that helps to protect purity, and it is the little precautions that preserve great virtues.

Moreover, since your husband is to see me on his way through, he will tell me, I hope, the authentic reasons for his trip, and, if I do not find them solid, either I shall dissuade him from seeing it through, or whatever happens, I will do what he does not wish to: on that you can count. In the meantime, I think there is more than enough to reassure you against a week's trial. Come, my Julie, I know you too well not to answer for you as much as and more than for myself. You will always be what you ought and wish to be. Were you to depend only on the honesty of your soul, still you would risk nothing; for I simply do not believe in unforeseen defeats; it is too easy to throw the vain name of weaknesses over faults which are al-

ways willful; never did a woman succumb without wanting to, and if I thought such a fate could await you, believe me, believe my tender friendship, believe all the sentiments that can arise in your poor Claire's heart; I would have too palpable an interest in shielding you from it to leave you to your own devices.

What Monsieur de Wolmar has declared to you about the knowledge he had before your marriage does not surprise me much: you know that I always suspected it; and I will tell you, moreover, that my suspicions have not been limited to Babi's indiscretions. I have never been able to believe that an upright and truthful man like your father, and one who himself had suspicions at the very least, could bring himself to deceive his son-in-law and friend. If then he committed you so strongly to secrecy, it was because the manner of revealing it would be very different coming from him or from you, and he doubtless wanted to give it a turn less likely to discourage Monsieur de Wolmar than the one he well knew you would not fail to give it yourself. But I must send your messenger back to you, we shall chat about all that more at leisure a month from now.

Farewell, little Cousin, I have preached enough to the preacher; resume your former occupation, and for good reason. I feel very restless at not being with you yet. I muddle all my business by trying to hurry and finish it up, and hardly know what I am doing. Ah Chaillot, Chaillot!....[127] if I were less crazy.... but I hope I shall always be.

P. S. By the way; I was forgetting to congratulate your Highness. Tell me, pray, is His Lordship your husband Hetman, Knez, or Boyard?[128] To me, it will seem like blasphemy if I must call you Madame la Boyarde.* O poor child! You who so lamented having been born a Demoiselle,[129] how lucky you are now to be the wife of a Prince! Between us, however, for a Lady of such high quality, I find your fears smack of the commoner. Do you not know that petty scruples befit only petty people, and that one laughs at a child from a good family who pretends he is his father's son?

LETTER XIV

From Monsieur de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe

I am leaving for Étange, little Cousin, I had intended to come see you on the way; but a delay on your account forces me to make more haste, and I would rather stop over in Lausanne on my way back, to spend a few

* Madame d'Orbe apparently was unaware that the first two names are indeed distinguished titles, but that a Boyard is a simple gentleman.

hours more with you. Besides I need to consult you about several matters it is better to bring up beforehand, so you will have the time to reflect on them before giving me your opinion.

I have not wished to explain to you my plan regarding the young man before his presence had confirmed the good opinion I had conceived of him. I believe I am already enough assured of him to confide to you between us that the plan is to charge him with my children's education. I am not unaware that these important responsibilities are a father's first duties; but when it is time to undertake them I shall be too old to fulfill them, and being placid and contemplative by temperament, I was never active enough to be able to govern the activity of youth. Moreover for the reason you know* Julie would not without misgivings see me assume a function I would have a hard time discharging to her approval. And since for a thousand other reasons your sex is not suited to these same responsibilities, their mother will devote all of her time to raising her Henriette properly; for your part my intention is for you to govern the household according to the program you will find established and which you have approved; my own will be to see three honest people work together for the happiness of the household, and enjoy in my old age a repose I will owe to them.

I have always seen that my wife would have considerable reluctance to entrust her children to mercenary hands, and I have not been able to fault her scruples. The respectable capacity of preceptor requires so many talents one could not buy, so many virtues that are without price, that it is useless to seek one with money. It is only in a man of genius that one might hope to find the enlightenment of a master; it is only a very dear friend whose heart could inspire him with a father's zeal; and genius is hardly for sale, much less attachment.

Your friend appeared to me to possess in combination all the suitable qualities, and if I have well compassed his soul, I imagine no greater felicity for him than to accomplish their mother's in these dear children. The only obstacle I can foresee lies in his affection for Milord Edward, which will not easily allow him to relinquish so dear a friend and one to whom he has such great obligations, unless Edward himself insists upon it. We await this extraordinary man soon, and since you have much influence over his mind, if he does not belie the impression you have given me of him, I could well charge you to negotiate this with him.

You now hold, little Cousin, the key to my whole conduct, which can only appear quite strange without this explanation, and which, I hope, will henceforth have Julie's approval and yours. The advantage of having a

* This reason is not yet known to the Reader; but he is requested not to be impatient.

wife like mine has led me to attempt means that would be impracticable with another. If I leave her in full confidence with her former lover under the sole guard of her virtue, I would be mad to establish this lover in my house before assuring myself that he had ceased forever to be what he was, and how could I so assure myself if I had a wife on whom I less relied?

I have sometimes seen you smile at my observations on love; but this time I have something that will humble you. I have made a discovery that neither you nor any woman on earth with all the subtlety one attributes to your sex would ever have made, the certainty of which nonetheless you will perhaps recognize at the first instant, and which you will at the least hold as proven once I have been able to explain to you what I base it on. To tell you that my young people are more in love than ever, this is, no doubt, not a marvel to apprise you of. To assure you on the contrary that they are perfectly cured; you know what reason, virtue are capable of, this is not their greatest miracle either: but that these two opposites should be simultaneously true; that they should burn more ardently than ever for each other, and that nothing more than an honest attachment should any longer prevail between them; that they should still be lovers and be no longer but friends; that, I think, you less expect, will have more difficulty understanding, and yet is in keeping with the exact truth.

Such is the enigma posed by the frequent contradictions you must have remarked in them, whether in their words or in their letters. What you have written to Julie with regard to the portrait[130] did more than all the rest to clarify the mystery to me, and I see that they are always in good faith, even when they constantly give themselves the lie. When I say they, it is especially the young man I mean; for in your friend's case, one can speak only by conjecture. A veil of virtue and honesty makes so many folds around her heart, that it is no longer possible for the human eye to enter it, not even her own. The only thing that makes me suspect that she still has some misgivings to overcome is that she never ceases searching within herself what she would be if she were entirely cured, and does it so intently that if she were truly cured she would not do it so well.

As for your other friend, who although virtuous is less afraid of the sentiments he still holds, I see in him all those he had in his earliest youth; but I see them without the right to take offense. It is not Julie de Wolmar he is in love with, it is Julie d'Étange; he does not hate me as the possessor of the person he loves, but as the ravisher of the one he has loved. Another man's wife is not his mistress, the mother of two children is no longer his former pupil. It is true she much resembles her and that she often recalls his memory of her. He loves her in time past: that is the true answer to the enigma. Take away his memory, and he will have no love left.

This is not a vain subtlety, little Cousin, it is a very solid observation which, extended to other loves, would perhaps have a much more general application than it appears. I even think that it would not be difficult to explain on this occasion in terms of your own ideas. The moment when you severed these two lovers was when their passion was at its highest point of impetuosity. Had they remained together longer they would perhaps have cooled over time; but their intensely aroused imagination has constantly showed them to each other the way they were in the instant of their separation. The young man, not seeing in his mistress the changes the advance of time made in her, loved her the way he had seen her, and no longer the way she was.*[131] To make him happy it was not simply a matter of giving her to him, but giving her back at the same age and in the same circumstances she was in at their love's beginning; the slightest alteration to the whole was so much subtracted from the happiness he had anticipated. She has become more beautiful, but she has changed; in this sense what she has gained turns to her prejudice; for it is with the former Julie and not a different one that he is in love.

The mistake that deludes and troubles him is to confuse the time frames and often to reproach himself, as a present sentiment, for what is but the effect of a too tender memory; but I am not sure whether it is not better to complete his cure than to disabuse him. To do that we can perhaps derive more advantage from his mistake than from his insights. Revealing to him the true state of his heart would be to apprise him of the death of his beloved; it would be giving him a dangerous affliction since a state of sadness is always conducive to love.

Delivered from the scruples that hinder him, he would perhaps indulge more in memories that should fade away; he would evoke them with less restraint, and his Julie's features are not so obliterated in Madame de Wolmar that by dint of looking for them he might not discover them again. I have thought that instead of taking away his impression of the progress he thinks he has made, and that serves as an encouragement to continue, we needed to make him lose the memory of the times he must forget, by cleverly substituting other notions for those he cherishes. You who had a part in creating them can have more of a part than anyone else in expunging

* You women are really foolish to think you can give some consistency to a sentiment as frivolous and fickle as love. Everything in nature changes, everything is in a continual flux, and you think you can inspire flames that are constant? And by what right do you pretend to be loved today because you were yesterday? Then keep the same face, the same age, the same humor; be ever the same and we will ever love you, if we can. But to change constantly and still want us to love you, is to want us at every instant to cease loving you; it is not to seek confident hearts, but to seek hearts as changeable as you.

them; but it is only when you are definitively with us that I want to whisper in your ear what must be done for that: a charge which, unless I am mistaken, you will not find terribly onerous. In the meantime, I am trying to familiarize him with the objects that panic him, by presenting them in such a way that they will no longer be dangerous to him. He is fiery, but weak and easy to tame. I take advantage of this trait to trick his imagination. In the place of his mistress I force him to see always the spouse of an honorable man and the mother of my children: I overlay one tableau with another, and cover the past with the present. One leads a skittish Steed up to the object that frightens it, so he will no longer be frightened. This is the way one must treat these young people whose imagination yet burns when their hearts have already grown cold, and makes them see monsters in the distance which disappear as they are approached.

I think I well know the strengths of them both, I expose them only to trials under which they can bear up; for wisdom does not consist in taking all manner of precautions indiscriminately, but in choosing those that are useful and neglecting those that are superfluous. The week during which I am going to leave them together will perhaps suffice to teach them to sort out their true sentiments and discover what they really are to each other. The more they see each other alone, the more easily will they understand their mistake in comparing what they feel with what they would once have felt in a similar situation. Add to this that it is important for them to accustom themselves without risk to the intimacy in which they will necessarily live if my views are realized. I see from Julie's conduct that she has received advice from you that she could not refuse to follow without prejudice to herself.[132] What pleasure I would take in offering her this proof that I feel all her worth, if she were a woman with whom a husband could claim some merit for his confidence! But had she in no degree mastered her heart, her virtue would remain the same; it would cost her dearer, and would triumph no less. Whereas if she still has some inner pain to suffer today, it can result from the emotion induced by a nostalgic conversation that she will be only too able to see coming, and will always avoid. Thus you see that my conduct here must not be gauged by common rules, but by the intentions that suggest it to me, and by the unique character of her toward whom I maintain it.

Farewell, little Cousin, until my return. Although I have not given all these explanations to Julie, I do not insist that you hide them from her. My maxim is not to interpose secrets between friends: thus I leave these to your discretion; make what use of it prudence and friendship dictate: I know that you will do nothing but for the best and the most honest.

LETTER XV
To Milord Edward

Monsieur de Wolmar left yesterday for Étange, and I can scarcely conceive the state of sadness in which his departure has left me. I believe that his wife's absence would distress me less than his. I feel even more constrained than in his very presence; a sullen silence reigns in the depths of my heart; a secret dread stifles its murmur, and, less troubled by desires than fears, I experience the terrors of crime without its temptations.

Do you know, Milord, where my soul takes assurance and sheds these unworthy apprehensions? At Madame de Wolmar's side. The minute I come near her the sight of her assuages my anxiety, her looks purify my heart. Such is the sway of hers that it always seems to inspire others with the sentiment of its innocence, and the peace of mind it effects. Unfortunately for me her schedule does not deliver her all day long to the company of her friends, and during the moments I am obliged to spend without seeing her, I would suffer less if I were farther from her.

What contributes further to sustaining the melancholy by which I feel overwhelmed is something she said to me yesterday after her husband's departure. Although she had up to this moment kept up a good appearance, for a long time she watched him disappear with a tearful look which I first attributed merely to this happy husband's leaving; but I could tell from her words that this tearfulness had yet another cause that was unknown to me. You see how we live, she said, and you know how dear he is to me. Do not believe however that the sentiment that joins me to him, as tender as love and more powerful, shares its weaknesses. Though we only reluctantly interrupt the sweet habit of being together, the assured hope of resuming it soon consoles us. Such a permanent state leaves few vicissitudes to fear, and during an absence of some days, we feel less the pain of such a short interval than the pleasure of anticipating its end. The affliction you read in my eyes comes from a more serious matter, and although it relates to Monsieur de Wolmar, it is not his leaving that causes it.

My dear friend, she added in an earnest voice, there is no true happiness on earth. I have as husband the most honest and gentlest of men; a mutual inclination adds to the duty that binds us; he has no desires other than mine; I have children who give and promise nothing but pleasures to their mother; never was there a friend more tender, more virtuous, more lovable than she whom my heart idolizes, and I am going to spend my life with her; you yourself contribute to making it dear to me by justifying so well my esteem and my sentiments for you; a lengthy and troublesome

lawsuit about to conclude is going to bring my excellent father back into our arms: everything prospers us; order and peace reign in our house; our domestics are devoted and faithful, our neighbors show us every sort of attachment, we enjoy the public goodwill. Favored in all things by heaven, fortune, and men, I see everything conspiring toward my happiness. A secret sorrow, a single sorrow poisons it, and I am not happy. She uttered these last words with a sigh that pierced my soul, and in which I saw too well that I had no part. She is not happy, said I to myself, sighing in turn, and it is no longer I who am the obstacle!

This ominous thought in an instant threw all of mine into confusion and disrupted the peace of mind I was beginning to enjoy. Impatient with the unbearable doubt into which these words had plunged me, I pressed her so to open her heart fully to me that she finally poured out into mine that fatal secret and gave me permission to reveal it to you. But now it is time for our walk, Madame de Wolmar is at this moment on her way from the gynaeceum to go walking with her children, she just sent me word. I have to rush off, Milord, I leave you for now, and postpone to resume in another letter the interrupted subject of this one.

LETTER XVI

From Madame de Wolmar to her husband

I await you Tuesday as you inform me, and you will find everything arranged according to your instructions. Go see Madame d'Orbe on your way back; she will tell you what has transpired during your absence; I would rather you learnt it from her than from me.

Wolmar, it is true, I believe I am worthy of your esteem; but your conduct is not the more right for that, and you make a cruel use of your wife's virtue.

LETTER XVII

To Milord Edward

I wish, Milord, to give you an account of a danger we ran these last few days, and which happily we escaped with nothing worse than fear and a little fatigue. This is well worth a letter of its own; upon reading it you will sense what engages me to write it to you.

You know that Madame de Wolmar's house is not far from the lake, and

that she likes boat excursions. Three days ago the idleness in which her husband's absence leaves us and the beauty of the evening led us to plan one such excursion for the morrow. At sunup we went down to the shore; we hired a boat with nets for fishing, three oarsmen, a domestic, and we embarked with a few provisions for dinner. I had brought along a rifle to shoot besolets*[133]; but she shamed me for killing birds wantonly and for the sole pleasure of doing harm. I therefore amused myself from time to time by calling gros-sifflets, tiou-tious, Crenets, and sifflassons,**[134] and only fired once from very far away at a grebe which I missed.

We spent an hour or two fishing five hundred paces offshore. The fishing was good; but, except for a trout that had been struck by an oar, Julie had them all thrown back into the water. These are, she said, suffering animals, let us set them free; let us enjoy their pleasure at having escaped the danger. This operation was conducted slowly, reluctantly, not without some objections, and I easily saw that our servants would more have appreciated the fish they had caught than the moral that saved its life.

We then headed into open water; then with a young man's petulance it is time I outgrew, having begun to *stroke*,***[135] I steered so directly toward the middle of the lake that we were soon more than a league from the shore.****[136] There I explained to Julie all the parts of the superb horizon around us. I showed her in the distance the mouths of the Rhone whose rushing current suddenly stops after a quarter of a league,[137] and seems hesitant to soil with its muddy waters the azure crystal of the lake. I pointed out to her the redans[138] in the mountains, whose corresponding and parallel angles form in the space between them a bed worthy of the river that fills it. By taking her off from our shores I took pleasure in having her admire the rich and charming coast of the Vaud country, where the number of cities, the countless crowd of people, the lush green hillsides all about form a ravishing tableau; where the earth everywhere cultivated and everywhere fecund offers the plowman, the shepherd, the vintner the assured fruit of their labors, which the greedy publican does not devour.[139] Then showing her the Chablais[140] on the opposite shore, a land not less favored by nature, and that nonetheless offers only a spectacle of misery, I had her distinguish clearly the different effects of the two governments, upon the wealth, the number and happiness of men. Thus it is, I said, that the earth opens her fertile bosom and lavishes her treasures on the happy peoples who till her for themselves. She seems to beam and come to life at the sweet

* A migratory bird on Lake Geneva. The besolet is not good to eat.

** Various kinds of Lake Geneva fowl; all very good to eat.

*** A term used by boatmen on Lake Geneva. It means to handle the oar that controls the others.

**** How can that be? Opposite Clarens the lake is far from being two leagues across.

sight of liberty; her pleasure is to nourish men. On the contrary the sorry hovels, the briar and brambles that cover a half-deserted land proclaim from afar that an absentee landlord rules there, and that she reluctantly yields to slaves a few meager productions from which they draw no benefit.[141]

While we were amusing ourselves agreeably thus scanning the neighboring coasts with our eyes, a séchard[142] which pushed us obliquely toward the opposite shore arose, freshened considerably, and when it occurred to us to turn back, the resistance was so strong that it was no longer possible for our frail boat to overcome it. Soon the waves became awesome; we had to get back to the Savoie shore and try to put in at the village of Meillerie which was just in front of us and which is practically the only place on that coast where the strand affords convenient beaching. But the wind having changed kept increasing, rendered our oarsmen's efforts useless, and caused us to drift further down along a series of steep rocks where there is no more shelter to be found.

We all took to the oars, and almost at that same instant I was distressed to see Julie seized with nausea, weak and faltering at the boat's edge. Fortunately she was used to the water and this condition did not last. Meanwhile our efforts increased with the danger; the sun, fatigue, and sweat put us all out of breath and into an excessive exhaustion. Then finding all her courage again Julie sparked ours with her supportive exhortations; she wiped all our faces without distinction, and mingling in a cup some wine with water for fear of drunkenness, she offered some by turns to the most exhausted. No, never did your adorable friend shine in such glory as in that moment when the heat and commotion had brightened her complexion with a brighter flame, and what added the most to her charms was that one could see so easily from her tearful look that all her ministries resulted less from fright for herself than from compassion for us. For an instant only two planks having come apart in a shock that splashed water over us all, she thought the boat was split, and in an exclamation of that tender mother I distinctly heard these words: O my children, must I never see you again? As for me whose imagination always exceeds the damage, although I knew the exact extent of the peril, I pictured the boat swallowed up from one moment to the next, that touching beauty flailing amidst the waves, and the pallor of death fading the roses of her face.

Finally by dint of labor we got back up to Meillerie, and after struggling for more than an hour ten paces from the bank, we managed to land. When we came ashore, all our fatigues were forgotten. Julie undertook to acknowledge all the efforts each had made, and just as at the height of the danger she had been mindful only of us, on land it seemed to her that she alone had been saved.

We dined with the appetite acquired from a hard labor. The trout was prepared: Julie who is extremely fond of it ate little of it, and I gathered that to help the boatmen forget their sacrifice, she was not eager to see me eat much myself. Milord, you have said this a thousand times: in the little as in the big things that loving soul is always itself.

After the dinner, the water continuing to be choppy, and the boat requiring some repair, I proposed we take a walk. Julie was reluctant because of the wind and the sun, and was mindful of my tiredness. I had my views, and so I answered on every count. I have been, I told her, accustomed since childhood to strenuous exercise: far from harming my health it makes it sturdier, and my recent voyage has made me even more robust. As far as the sun and the wind, you have your straw hat, we will reach shelters and woods; all it takes is to climb a while between the boulders, and you who don't like the plain will easily bear the fatigue. She did what I wished, and we set out while our hands were dining.

You know that after my exile in the Valais, I came back ten years ago to Meillerie to await permission to return. That is where I spent such sad and delightful days, thinking of nothing but her, and that is where I wrote to her a letter she was so moved by. I had always desired to revisit the isolated retreat that served as my shelter amidst the ice, and where my heart took pleasure in conversing inwardly with the object it held most dear on earth. The opportunity to visit this so cherished place, during a more agreeable season and with her whose image formerly dwelled there with me, was the secret motive of my walk. It gave me pleasure to think of showing her earlier monuments of such a constant and unhappy passion.[143]

We reached it after an hour's walk through winding and cool trails, which, climbing imperceptibly through the trees and boulders, were in no way inconvenient except for the length of the hike. Approaching and recognizing my old markers, I was nearly in a swoon; but I caught hold of myself, I concealed my turmoil, and we arrived. In this solitary place was a wild and forsaken nook; but filled with those sorts of beauties that are pleasing only to sensible souls and appear horrible to others. A mountain stream formed by the melting snows carried muddy water to within twenty paces of us, noisily ferrying with it clay, sand, and rocks. Behind us a range of inaccessible cliffs separated the esplanade where we were standing from that part of the Alps which is named *les glacières*,[144] because enormous crests of ice that are constantly spreading have covered them since the world began.* Forests of dark spruce shaded us gloomily on the right. On the left beyond the mountain stream was a large oak wood, and below us that im-

* These mountains are so high that a half-hour after sunset their crests are still lit by the sun's rays, the red of which covers these white peaks with a lovely rose color that can be seen a long way off.

mense plain of water which the lake forms in the midst of the Alps separated us from the rich coasts of the Vaud, the tableau of which was crowned by the Peak of the majestic Jura.

In the midst of these grand and superb objects, the little spot where we were standing displayed the charms of a cheerful and rural site; several brooks filtered through the rocks, and ran down the greenery in crystal trickles. Several wild fruit trees bent their heads over us; the damp and cool earth was covered with grass and flowers. Comparing so pleasant a retreat with the surrounding objects, it seemed that this deserted place was meant to be the sanctuary of two lovers who alone had escaped nature's cataclysm.

After we had reached this nook and I had spent some time taking it in: What! I said to Julie, looking at her with a tear in my eye, does your heart tell you nothing here, and do you not feel some secret emotion at the sight of a place so full of you? Then without waiting for her answer, I led her toward the cliff and showed her her initials carved in a thousand places, and several lines of Petrarch and Tasso relative to the situation I was in when I traced them. Seeing them again myself after such a long time, I experienced how powerfully the presence of objects can revive the violent sentiments with which one was formerly seized in their presence. I said to her somewhat vehemently: O Julie, everlasting charm of my heart! Here are the sites where once sighed for you the world's most faithful lover. Here is the site where your dear image was all his happiness, and prepared the one he eventually received from you. Then neither these fruits nor this shade was to be seen; greenery and flowers did not carpet these compartments; the flow of these brooks did not form their divisions; these birds did not make their songs heard, the voracious hawk, the funereal crow and the terrible Alpine eagle alone made their cries echo through these caverns; immense ice formations hung from all these cliffs; festoons of snow were these trees' only ornament; everything here bespoke the rigors of winter and the horror of hoarfrost; the flame in my heart alone made this place bearable, and the whole day long was spent thinking of you. Over there is the stone where I sat to watch from afar your blessed abode; on this one was written the Letter that struck your heart; these sharp stones served as my burin[145] to carve your initials; here I crossed the icy stream to catch one of your Letters which a gust of wind was carrying away; there I came to reread and kiss a thousand times the last one you wrote me; over there is the brink where with avid and somber eye I measured the depths of this abyss; finally it was here that before my sad departure I came to weep for you as you lay dying and swear not to survive you.[146] Maid too constantly loved, O you for whom I was born! Must I find myself with you in the same places, and long for the time I spent here grieving over your ab-

8. Monuments of bygone love.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

sence?.... I was about to go on; but Julie, who seeing me move closer to the brink had taken fright and seized my hand, clutched it silently, looking at me tenderly and barely holding back a sigh; then all of a sudden turning away her eyes and pulling me by the arm: let us go from here, my friend, she said with trembling voice, the air in this place is not good for me. I departed with her moaning, but without answering her, and I left forever this sad nook, as I would have left Julie herself.

Once we had returned slowly to the landing after several detours, we separated. She wished to remain alone, and I went on walking without paying much mind to where I was going; upon my return the boat being not yet ready nor the water still, we supped sadly, eyes downturned, dreamily, eating little and speaking even less. After supper, we went to sit on the strand while awaiting the time for departure. Imperceptibly the moon rose, the water became more calm, and Julie suggested that we leave. I gave her my hand to assist her into the boat, and seating myself beside her it never occurred to me to let go her hand. We maintained a deep silence. The even and rhythmic sound of the oars induced me to dream. The rather cheerful song of the snipes,* reminding me of the pleasures of another time, instead of cheering me up saddened me. Little by little I felt the melancholy that overwhelmed me increase. A serene sky, the moon's soft beams, the silvery shimmering of the water shining about us, the confluence of the most agreeable sensations, the very presence of this cherished one: nothing could turn aside a thousand painful reflections from my heart.

I began by recalling a similar walk taken formerly with her under the spell of our first love. Every delightful sentiment that then filled my soul now returned to torment it; all the events of our youth, our studies, our discussions, our letters, our trysts, our pleasures,

> *E tanta fede, e si dolci memorie.*
> *E si luongo costume!*[147]
>
> And such faith, and such sweet memories
> and such a long habit!

that multitude of little things which presented me with the image of my former happiness, everything came back, for my greater present misery, to fix itself in my memory. It is over, I was saying to myself, those times, those happy times are no more; they have vanished forever. Alas, they will never return; and we live, and we are together, and our hearts are still united! It seemed to me that I would have borne her death or absence more pa-

* The Lake Geneva snipe is not the bird that is called by the same name in France. The sharper and more lively song of ours lends to the lake on summer nights a sensation of life and brightness that makes its shores all the more charming.

tiently, and that I had suffered less during all the time I had spent far from her. When I grieved from far away, the hope of seeing her again gave my heart relief; I flattered myself that an instant of her presence would do away with all my sufferings, I envisaged at least among possible states one less cruel than mine. But to be near her; but to see her, touch her, speak to her, love her, worship her, and, while nearly possessing her anew, to feel she was forever lost to me; all this cast me into fits of fury and rage that stirred me by degrees to the point of despair. Soon I began to turn over lethal designs in my mind, and in a transport it makes me shudder to think about, I was violently tempted to hurl her with me into the waves, and there in her arms put an end to my life and my long torments. This horrible temptation finally became so strong that I was obliged to let go her hand suddenly and gain the bow of the boat.

There my keen agitations began to take another course; a gentler sentiment little by little crept into my soul, emotion overcame despair; I began to shed a torrent of tears, and this state compared to the one I was just emerging from was not without some pleasures. I wept greatly, for a good moment, and was relieved. When I felt completely settled, I returned to Julie; I took her hand once more. She was holding her handkerchief; I could tell it was quite moist. Ah, said I softly, I see that our hearts have never ceased to understand each other! It is true, she said in a broken voice; but let this be the last time they will have spoken on this register. Then we resumed our peaceable conversation, and after an hour's crossing, we arrived without further incident. When we were back in the house I noticed by the lamplight that her eyes were red and quite swollen; she must not have found mine in better condition. After the fatigues of this day she had great need of rest: she retired, and I went to bed.

There, my friend, you have the detail of the day of my life in which without exception I have experienced the most powerful emotions. I hope they will be the crisis[148] that will restore me completely to myself. Moreover, I will tell you that this adventure has convinced me more than all the arguments, of the freedom of man and the merit of virtue. How many are but slightly tempted and succumb? As for Julie; my eyes saw it, and my heart felt it: She sustained that day the greatest battle that a human soul could have sustained; yet she triumphed: but how did I manage to remain that far from her? O Edward! When seduced by your mistress you were able to triumph at once over your desires and hers, were you merely a man?[149] Without you, I was lost, perhaps. A hundred times during this perilous day the memory of your virtue gave me back my own.

End of Part Four.

Part Five

LETTER I

From Milord Edward*[1]

Put an end to your childhood, friend, awaken. Do not turn your entire life over to a long slumber of reason. The years flow by, you have only enough left for becoming wise. At thirty years past, it is time to give some thought to oneself; start then to search within yourself, and be a man once before you die.

My dear man, your heart has long deceived you with respect to your understanding. You have meant to philosophize before you knew how; you have mistaken sentiment for reason, and content with judging things by the impression they have made on you, you have always been ignorant of their true value. A righteous heart is, I admit, the first organ of truth; he who has felt nothing is incapable of learning anything; he merely floats from errors to other errors, he acquires nothing but vain knowledge and sterile learning, because the true relation of things to man, which is his principal science, remains ever hidden to him. But not to study also the relations things have between them, the better to judge those they have with us, is to limit oneself to the first half of this science. It is little to know human passions, if one knows not how to appreciate their objects; and this second study can only be accomplished in the calm of meditation.

The wise man's youth is the time of his experiments, his passions are their instruments; but after applying his soul to exterior objects in order to feel them, he withdraws it within himself to consider them, compare them, know them. You must be in that case more than anyone else on earth. Everything that a sensible heart can experience in the way of pleasures and pains has filled yours; everything a man can see, your eyes have seen. In the space of twelve years you have exhausted all the sentiments that can be scattered over a long life, and you have acquired, still young, the experience of an old man. Your first observations had to do with simple people virtually emerging from the hands of nature,[2] as if to serve you as a point of reference. Exiled in the capital of the most celebrated people in creation, you leapt, so to speak, to the opposite extreme: genius fills in

* This letter appears to have been written before reception of the previous one.

for the intermediate steps. Next going among the only nation of men remaining among the sundry herds which cover the earth,[3] although you have not seen law rule, at least you have seen it still extant; you have learned by what signs that sacred organ of a people's will can be recognized, and how the empire of public reason is the true foundation of freedom.[4] You have travelled through all climes, seen every region the sun shines upon. A rarer spectacle and one worthy of the wise man's eye, the spectacle of a sublime and pure soul overcoming its passions and reigning over itself is the one you are now enjoying. The first object that met your eyes is the one that still does, and your admiration for it is but the better founded after having beheld so many others. There is nothing remaining for you to feel or see that merits your attention. The only object left for you to behold is yourself, the only joy to savor that of wisdom. You have lived by this short life; try now to live for the one that is to last.

Your passions, of which you were long the slave, have left you virtuous. Therein lies all your glory; it is great, no doubt, but be less proud of it. Your strength itself is the product of your weakness. Do you know what it is that caused you always to love virtue? It took on in your eyes the appearance of that adorable woman who so well represents it, and it would be very unlikely indeed for so dear an image to allow you to lose the taste for it. But will you never love it for its own sake, and will you not strive for the good by your own efforts, as Julie did by hers? Idle enthusiast of her virtues, will you forever limit yourself to admiring them, without ever imitating them? You speak fervidly of the manner in which she fulfills her duties of wife and mother; but you, when will you fulfill your duties of man and friend after her example? A woman has won out over herself, and a philosopher has difficulty mastering himself! Is it then your intention to remain forever a mere talker like the others, and limit yourself to writing good books, instead of doing good deeds?*[5] Take care, my dear man; there still prevails in your letters a tone of flaccidity and languor that dis-

* No, this century of philosophy shall not pass without producing a true Philosopher. I know one, just one, I admit; but that is something nevertheless, and to make me all the happier, it is in my country that he exists. Shall I dare name him here, him whose true glory lies in having been able to remain mostly unknown? Learned and modest Abauzit, may your sublime simplicity forgive my heart for a zeal whose objective is not your fame. No, it is not you I mean to make known to this century unworthy of admiring you; it is Geneva I mean to glorify as your home; it is my fellow Citizens whom I wish to honor by the honor they render you. Happy the country in which merit hidden is all the more valued! Happy the people among whom arrogant youth comes and lowers its dogmatic tone, blushing at its vain knowledge, before the learned ignorance of the sage! Venerable and virtuous old man! it will not be said you have been extolled by the beaux-esprits, that their noisy Academies have echoed with your praise; but that instead of depositing like them your wisdom in books, you have placed it in your life for the example of the fatherland you have seen fit to elect, which you love, and which respects you. You have lived like Socrates; but he died at the hand of his fellow citizens, and you are cherished by yours.

pleases me, and is much more a remnant of your passion than an effect of your character. I hate weakness in all things, and want none in my friend. There is no virtue without strength,[6] and the road to vice is cowardice. Do you really dare rely on yourself with a heart devoid of courage? Poor fool! If Julie were weak, you would succumb tomorrow and be nothing but a vile adulterer. But there you are alone with her; learn to know her, and blush for yourself.

I hope I will soon be able to come join you. You know what the purpose of this trip is. Twelve years of errors and anxieties make me dubious about myself; resisting I could do by myself, for choosing I need the eyes of a friend; and I take pleasure in making everything common between us, gratitude as well as attachment. Yet make no mistake about it: before extending you my confidence, I shall examine whether you are worthy of it, and whether you deserve to reciprocate the services I rendered you. I know your heart, and am satisfied with it; this is not enough; it is your judgment I require in a choice which reason alone must settle, and in which mine can delude me. I do not fear the passions which, waging open war on us, warn us to be on the defensive, leave us, whatever they do, conscious of all our faults, and to which we yield only insofar as we wish to. I fear their illusion which deceives rather than constrains, and causes us to do unawares something other than we mean. We need only ourselves to repress our inclination; we sometimes need someone else to discern which ones it is all right to follow, and that is why we require the friendship of a wise man who sees for us from a different angle the objects it is in our interest to know thoroughly. Proceed therefore to examine yourself and ask yourself whether, still a prey to vain regrets, you will forever be useless to yourself and to others, or whether finally taking control of yourself you are now willing to get your soul into a condition for illuminating your friend's.

My business will keep me in London only another fortnight; I shall then go by way of our army in Flanders[7] where I am likely to remain again as long, so you should hardly expect me before the end of next month or the beginning of October. Do not write me further in London but with the army at the enclosed address. Continue your descriptions; despite the unsuitable tone of your letters they move and instruct me; they inspire in me designs of retirement and repose in keeping with my maxims and my age. Above all assuage the apprehensions you have given me concerning Madame de Wolmar: if her fate is not happy, who can presume to aspire to happiness? After the detailed account she gave you, I cannot conceive what her happiness is wanting.*

* I like the muddle of this Letter, in that it is totally in good Edward's character, who is never so philosophical as when he behaves foolishly, and never reasons so much as when he does not know what he is talking about.

LETTER II

To Milord Edward

Yes, Milord, I confirm to you with transports of joy, the scene at Meillerie was the crisis of my folly and my ills.[8] Monsieur de Wolmar's explanations have entirely reassured me as to my heart's true condition. This too frail heart is cured insofar as it can be, and I prefer the sadness of an imaginary longing to the terror of being constantly besieged by crime. Since the return of this worthy friend, I no longer hesitate to give him such a dear name and one whose full value you have made me appreciate so well. It is the least title I owe to anyone who is helping to restore me to virtue. There is peace deep in my soul as in the abode in which I dwell. I am beginning to see myself here without misgivings, and live here as if at home; and if I do not adopt entirely the authority of a master, I take even more pleasure in regarding myself as the child of the house. The simplicity, the equality I see reigning here have an attraction that moves me and inclines me to respect. I spend peaceful days between living reason and sensible virtue. By associating with these happy spouses, their sway extends to me and touches me imperceptibly, and my heart is gradually coming into unison with theirs, just as one's voice takes on unwittingly the tone of those with whom one is conversing.

What a delightful retreat! What an enchanting domicile! How the sweet habit of living here increases its value! And how, though its appearance at first hardly seems dazzling, it is difficult not to love it as soon as one is familiar with it! The delight Madame de Wolmar takes in fulfilling her noble duties, in making those who approach her happy and good, is passed on to everyone who is its object, to her husband, to her children, to her guests, to her domestics. Tumult, noisy games, long, loud laughter do not echo through this peaceful abode; but everywhere contented hearts and cheerful faces are to be found. If tears are sometimes shed here, they are tears of emotion and joy. Dark chagrin, regret, sorrow, come no nearer here than do the vice and remorse whose fruit they are.

As for her, it is certain that except for the secret pain that torments her, the cause of which I related to you in my previous letter,* everything conspires to make her happy. Yet with so much cause for happiness, a thousand other women would be miserable in her place. Her uniform and withdrawn life would be unbearable to them; they would lose patience with the bother of children; they would become bored with domestic du-

* This previous letter is not to be found. The reason for this will be seen shortly.

ties; they would not be able to suffer the country; the wisdom and esteem of an undemonstrative husband would compensate them neither for his coldness nor for his age; his presence and even his attachment would weigh on them. Either they would devise the means of sending him off in order to live after their liking, or else going off themselves, they would scorn the pleasures of their station, would seek more dangerous ones further away, and would be at their ease in their own homes only when they came there as visitors. It takes a healthy soul to appreciate the charms of seclusion; one sees almost none but good folk finding contentment in the bosom of their family and closing themselves in with them voluntarily; if there is on earth a happy life, it is without doubt the one they spend there: but the instruments of happiness are nothing to those who know not how to use them, and one can appreciate what true happiness consists in only insofar as one is fit to enjoy it.

If I had to say concisely what they do in this house to be happy, I think I would have answered rightly in saying that *they know the art of living*; not in the sense which that word is given in France, which is to have with one's neighbor certain manners established by fashion; but with the life of man, and for which he is born; with that life you tell me of, the example of which you set for me, which lasts beyond itself, and which one does not hold as lost the day one dies.

Julie has a father who worries over his family's well-being; she has children whose subsistence must be properly assured. That should be the principal care of social man, and it is also the first she and her husband conjointly concerned themselves with. When they set up their household they examined the state of their holdings; they considered not so much whether they were proportionate to their rank as to their needs, and seeing that there is no honest family that ought not to be content with them, they did not have so poor an opinion of their children as to fear that the patrimony they have to leave them would not be sufficient. They applied themselves therefore to improving rather than extending it; they invested their money more for security than for gain; instead of buying new lands, they gave a new value to the ones they already had, and the example of their conduct is the only treasure by which they wish to increase their heritage.

It is true that a possession that does not increase is likely to diminish through a thousand mishaps; but if this reason is a motive for increasing it once, when will it ever cease being a pretext for increasing it endlessly? It will have to be divided among several children; but are they to remain idle? Is not the labor of each one a supplement to his share, and ought not his industry enter into the calculation of his estate? In such a way does insatiable avarice encroach under the guise of prudence, and lead to vice by

dint of pursuing security. It is in vain, says Monsieur de Wolmar, that one pretends to give human affairs a solidity which is not in their nature. Reason itself would have us leave many things to chance, and since our life and fortune always depend on it in spite of ourselves, what folly constantly to inflict real anguish on oneself in order to prevent dubious ills and inevitable dangers! The only precaution he took in this domain was to live a year on his capital, so as to allow himself that much advance on his revenue; in this way the product is always a year ahead of the outlay. He chose to shorten his principal slightly rather than constantly have to run after his interest payments. The advantage of not being reduced to ruinous expedients at the slightest unforeseen mishap has already repaid him many times over for this advance. Thus order and discipline stand him in lieu of savings, and he gains by what he has spent.

The masters of this house enjoy a modest estate in terms of the notions of fortune that prevail in society; but ultimately I know no one more opulent than they. There is no such thing as absolute wealth. That word merely signifies a relation of surplus between the desires and the means of the rich man. One is rich with an acre of land; another is a beggar amidst his mounds of gold. Disorder and fancies know no bounds, and make more people poor than do real needs. Here the proportion is established upon a basis that makes it unshakable, that is, the perfect agreement of the two spouses. The husband has taken responsibility for collection of payments, the wife directs their use, and it is in the harmony that reigns between them that the source of their wealth lies.

What at first most struck me in this house was to find in it comfort, freedom, gaiety in combination with order and attention to detail. The great defect of well-regulated houses is to have a sad and constrained air about them. The extreme solicitude of its heads always entails a whiff of avarice. Everything around them suggests penury; the rigor of order has something servile about it that is difficult to put up with. The Domestics do their duty, but they do it with a discontent and fearful mien. Guests are well received, but they avail themselves only diffidently of the freedom they are accorded, and since one always perceives oneself as going against the rule, one does nothing without trembling for fear of acting indiscreet. One can tell that these slave fathers do not live for themselves, but for their children; forgetting that they are not fathers only, but men, and that they owe their children the example of the life of man and of the happiness that goes with wisdom. Here more judicious rules are observed. Here they think that one of the main duties of a good paterfamilias is not only to make his home cheerful so that his children will thrive here, but to live himself an agreeable and easy life, so that they will feel that one is happy

living as he does, and will not be tempted to adopt for that purpose a conduct opposed to his. One of the maxims Monsieur de Wolmar most often repeats on the subject of the two Cousins' entertainments is that the sad and miserly life of their parents is almost always the primary source of the children's disorder.

As for Julie, who never had any rule but her heart and could not have a surer one, she gives in to it without scruple, and in order to do good, she does whatever it requires of her. It never ceases requiring much of her, and no one is better able than she to set a value on the satisfactions of life. How could this so sensible soul be insensible to pleasures? On the contrary, she loves them, she seeks them, she refuses none of those that appeal to her; one can see that she knows how to savor them: but these pleasures are Julie's pleasures. She neglects neither her own comforts nor those of the people she cherishes, that is to say, all those around her. She counts nothing superfluous that can contribute to the well-being of a reasonable person; but she calls superfluous everything that serves only to shine in others' eyes, so that in her house one finds the luxury of pleasure and sensuality without refinement or indolence. As for the luxury of magnificence and vanity, one sees only as much of it as she could not refuse to her father's taste; and still her own can be recognized which consists in lending to things less luster and brilliance than elegance and grace. When I tell her of the means that are daily invented in Paris or London for suspending Carriages more softly, she rather approves of that; but when I tell her how high the expense of painting[9] them has been carried, she no longer understands me, and always asks whether these handsome lacquers make the Carriages more comfortable? She does not doubt that I am greatly exaggerating about the scandalous paintings with which they decorate these cars at great expense instead of the coats-of-arms they used to put on them, as if it were finer to advertise oneself to passers-by as a man of poor morals than as a man of quality![10] What especially revolted her was to learn that women had introduced or supported this custom, and that their Carriages differed from the men's only by their somewhat more lascivious tableaux. I was forced to cite to her on this head one of your illustrious friend's[11] retorts which she has considerable difficulty crediting. I was at his place one day when he was being shown a vis-à-vis[12] of this sort. Scarcely had he set his eyes on the panels than he walked away saying to the master,[13] show this carriage to women of the Court; an honorable man would not dare use it.

As the first step toward the good is to do no harm, the first step toward happiness is not to suffer. These two maxims which if well understood would dispense with many precepts of morality, are dear to Madame de

Wolmar. She is extremely sensible to ill-being, both hers and others', and it would not be easier for her to be happy seeing people in misery than for the upright man to preserve his virtue ever pure while keeping constant company with the wicked. She has not that heartless pity that is content to turn away its eyes from ills it could relieve. She goes seeking them out in order to heal them; it is the existence of unfortunates and not the sight of them that torments her: to her it does not suffice not to know there are some, for her peace of mind she must know that there are none, at least around her: for it would be going beyond the bounds of reason to make one's happiness dependent on that of all men. She inquires about the needs of her neighborhood with the warmth she puts into her own interests; she knows all its inhabitants; she extends to it, so to speak, her family circle, and spares no care to hold off all the sentiments of suffering and pain to which human life is subjected.

Milord, I mean to profit from your lessons; but forgive me an enthusiasm I no longer find fault with and which you share. There will never be but one Julie on earth. Providence has watched over her, and nothing that relates to her is an effect of chance. Heaven seems to have given her to the world in order to show at once the excellence of which a human soul is capable, and the happiness it can enjoy in the obscurity of private life, without the assistance of resplendent virtues that can raise it higher than itself, nor of the fame that can pay them honor. Her fault, if it was one, served only to deploy her strength and courage. Her relatives, her friends, her domestics, all born lucky, were made to love her and be loved by her. Her country was the only one where it befitted her to be born; the simplicity that makes her sublime needed to reign about her; to be happy she had to live among happy people. Had it been her misfortune to be born among unhappy peoples groaning under the weight of oppression, and struggling hopelessly and fruitlessly against the misery that consumes them, every cry of the oppressed would have poisoned her life; the general desolation would have crushed her, and her beneficent heart, exhausted with pain and worries, would have made her continually feel the ills she could not have relieved.

Instead of that, here everything quickens and sustains her natural goodness. She has no public calamities to bemoan. She does not have before her eyes the awful image of misery and despair. The well-off Villager*[14] needs her advice more than her gifts. If there happens to be some orphan

* Near Clarens there is a Village named Moutru, the Commune alone of which is rich enough to sustain all its members, had they not an inch of land to their own names. Thus bourgeoisie in this village is almost as difficult to acquire as it is in Bern. What a shame they do not have some honorable subdelegate, to make Messieurs de Moutru more sociable, and their bourgeoisie a bit less dear!

too young to earn his living, some forgotten widow who suffers in secret, some old man with no children, whose arms weakened with age no longer contribute to his keep, she does not fear lest her kindnesses become onerous to them, by causing their public levies to be increased so that some well-parchmented rascals can be exempted.[15] She savors the good she does, and sees it prosper. The happiness she enjoys multiplies and extends about her. Every house she enters soon becomes a tableau of hers; comfort and well-being are one of her least influences, harmony and propriety follow her from family to family. When she leaves home her eyes are met by nothing but agreeable objects; when she returns home she finds yet more pleasant ones; everywhere she sees what pleases her heart, and this soul that is so insensible to †self-love learns to love itself in its good works. No, Milord, I repeat; nothing relative to Julie is outside the scope of virtue. Her charms, her talents, her tastes, her struggles, her faults, her regrets, her home, her friends, her family, her pains, her pleasures, and her entire destiny make of her life a unique example, which few women will wish to imitate, but which they will love despite themselves.

What pleases me the most about the care taken here for the happiness of others is that it is all directed by wisdom, and no abuse ever results from it. It is not always that easy to be beneficent, and often someone who thinks he is rendering great services does a great deal of harm he does not see, for a small amount of good he perceives. A rare quality in women of the best character, and one which shines eminently in Madame de Wolmar's, is an exquisite discrimination in the distribution of her good works, whether in the choice of means to make them useful, or in the choice of the people on whom she bestows them. She has given herself rules which she never countervenes. She knows how to grant and refuse what she is asked for, without there being any weakness in her goodness, nor arbitrariness in her refusals. Whoever has committed an evil act in his life has nothing to hope for from her but justice, and forgiveness if he has offended her, never favor nor protection that she could invest in a better subject. I have seen her refuse rather curtly to a man of this sort a favor it was hers alone to accord. "I wish you happiness," she told him, "but I do not want to contribute to it, for fear of doing harm to others by putting you in a position to do it. The world is not so short on good people who suffer, for one to be reduced to worrying about you." It is true that this harshness is very difficult for her and that it is rare for her to exercise it. Her maxim is to count good all those whose wickedness is not proven to her, and there are very few wicked people who lack the deftness to avoid being tested. She has not that lazy charity of the rich who pay the wretched in money for the right to reject their entreaties, and who for a good work implored never know how

to give anything but alms. Her purse is not inexhaustible, and since she has been a materfamilias, she has learned better to control its use. Of all the kinds of succor by which one can provide relief to the wretched, alms are in truth the one that costs the least inconvenience; but it is also the most transient and the least solid; and Julie seeks not to be rid of them, but to help them.

Neither does she indiscriminately grant recommendations and services without knowing for sure whether the use to be made of them is reasonable and just. Her protection is never refused to anyone who really needs it and deserves to obtain it; but as for those whom restiveness or ambition move to rise in the world and relinquish a station where they are well off, rarely can they enlist her involvement in their business. The condition natural to man is to till the land and live off its fruits. The peaceable dweller of the fields in order to feel his happiness needs only to understand it. All the true pleasures of man are within his reach; he has only the pains indissociable from mankind, pains that he who thinks he can avoid them merely exchanges for other, more cruel ones.*[16] This station is the only necessary one and the most useful. It is unhappy only when others tyrannize it with their violence, or seduce it with the example of their vices: In it consists a country's genuine prosperity, the strength and grandeur that a people derives from itself, which in no way depends on other nations, never forces it to attack in order to maintain itself, and offers the surest means of its own defense. When it is a question of gauging public power, the wit visits the prince's palace, his ports, his troops, his arsenals, his cities; the true political thinker surveys the lands and visits the plowman's cottage. The former sees what has been done, the latter what can be done.

On this principle they make a point here, and even more at Étange, of contributing as much as they can to rendering the peasants' condition easy, without ever helping them to leave it. The best off and the poorest have equally the mania of sending their children into the cities, some to study and one day become Important, the others to enter domestic service and relieve their parents of their upkeep. The young people for their part often like to break loose; the girls aspire to bourgeois finery, the boys enlist in a foreign army; they think it more prestigious to bring back to their village, instead of love of the fatherland and of liberty, the roguish and grovelling manner of mercenary soldiers, and the ridiculous contempt of their former station. They show them all the error of these prejudices, the corruption of children, the abandonment of fathers, and the continual risks to life, fortune, and morals, where a hundred perish for one who suc-

* Man once having renounced his original simplicity becomes so stupid that he does not even know how to desire. His wishes granted would all lead him to fortune, never to felicity.

ceeds. If they persist, foolish fantasy is not facilitated, they are allowed to run off to vice and misery, and care is taken to compensate those who are persuaded for the sacrifices they make to reason. They teach them to honor their natural condition by honoring it themselves; they do not adopt city manners with peasants, but treat them with a direct and solemn familiarity, which, preserving each in his own station, teaches them nonetheless to think highly of their own. There isn't a single good peasant whom they do not induce to take pride in himself, by demonstrating to him the distinction they make between him and these little upstarts who come to shine for a moment in their village and overshadow their kin with their own brilliance. Monsieur de Wolmar and the Baron when he is here rarely fail to attend the exercises, the prize ceremonies, the village and neighboring parades. Those youth who are already naturally impassioned and warlike, seeing old Officers having a good time at their gatherings, think more highly of themselves for it and gain in self-confidence. They give them still more by showing them that soldiers retired from foreign service know less than they do in every respect; for whatever one does, never will five sols' pay and the fear of flogging produce emulation equal to that inspired in a free man under arms by the presence of his relatives, his neighbors, his friends, his mistress, and by the glory of his country.

Madame de Wolmar's great maxim is therefore not to favor changes of condition, but to contribute to making each one happy in his own, and above all to make sure that the happiest of all, which is that of a villager in a free State, is not depopulated in favor of the others.

Thereupon I raised with her the objection of the sundry talents that nature seems to have distributed to men, to give each of them a usefulness, without respect to the condition in which they were born. To that she answered me that there were two things to take into consideration prior to talent, namely morals, and felicity. Man, she said, is too noble a being to have to serve merely as an instrument of others, and he ought not to be used for purposes that suit them without consulting also what suits him; for men are not made for positions, but positions are made for them, and in order to allocate things appropriately one must not in distributing them look for the job each man is best at, but for the one that is best for each man, so as to render him as good and happy as is possible. It is never permissible to degrade a human soul for the benefit of others, nor to make a villain for the service of honest people.

Now of a thousand fellows who leave the Village there are not ten who will fail to come to ruin in the city, or to carry its vices farther than the people they learned them from. Those who succeed and make their fortune almost always do so through the dishonest paths that lead to it. The un-

happy ones whom fortune has not favored do not return to their former station, and turn into beggars or thieves rather than become peasants again. If of these thousand there is a single one who holds out against the example and keeps himself an honorable man, do you think that all told one spends as happy a life as if he had spent it safe from violent passions, in the peaceful obscurity of his original condition?

In order to follow one's talent one must know what it is. Is it so simple a business always to discern men's talents, and if at the age when one makes a choice it is so difficult to see clearly those of the children one has best observed, how shall a young peasant manage by himself to identify his own? Nothing is more equivocal than the signs of inclinations the child manifests early on; the spirit of mimicry often has more to do with it than talent; they will depend rather on a fortuitous encounter than a definite penchant, and even the penchant does not always promise the disposition. In true talent, in true genius there is a certain simplicity that makes it less restive, less agitated, slower to declare itself than an apparent and false talent one mistakes as genuine, and which is merely a vain eagerness to shine, without the means of succeeding at it. One hears a drum and wants to be a General; another sees building under way and imagines himself an Architect. My gardener Gustin took a liking to drawing from seeing me draw; I sent him to learn in Lausanne; he already imagined himself a painter, and he is only a gardener.[17] The opportunity, the desire of advancement, decide upon the station one chooses. It is not enough to be aware of one's genius, one also has to be willing to pursue it. Shall a Prince turn coachman because he can drive his carriage well? Shall a Duke turn cook because he creates good stews? People have talents only for rising, no one has any for descending; do you think that can be nature's order? Were each to know his talent and wish to follow it, how many of them could? How many would surmount unfair obstacles? How many would defeat unworthy Rivals? He who is aware of his weakness calls trickery and connivance to his aid, which another more sure of himself scorns. Have you not yourself told me a hundred times that so many establishments in favor of the arts do nothing but harm them? By indiscriminately multiplying Candidates one can't tell them apart, true merit remains stifled in the crowd, and the honors due the ablest all go to the best schemer. If there existed a society where positions and ranks were exactly correlated to talents and personal merit, each could aspire to the position he was best able to fill; but one must be guided by surer rules and renounce the value of talents, when the vilest of all is the only one that leads to fortune.

I will go further, she continued; I find it hard to believe that so many sundry talents ought all to be developed; for that would require that the

number of those possessing them be exactly proportionate to society's needs, and if we left to work the land only those who eminently possess agricultural talent, or if we took away from that work all those who are better suited to another, there would not remain enough laborers to till it and provide us sustenance. I would think that men's talents are like the virtues of the drugs nature gives us to heal our illnesses, whereas her intention is that we should not need them. There are plants that poison us, animals that devour us, talents that are pernicious to us. If each thing always had to be employed in keeping with its principal properties, one might do men more harm than good. Good and simple peoples do not need so many talents; they sustain themselves better through their simplicity alone than the others do with all their industry. But as they become more corrupt their talents develop as if to serve as a supplement to the virtues they are losing, and to force even the wicked to be useful despite themselves.

Another thing with which I found it hard to agree with her was aid to beggars. As this is a major highway, many pass by here, and they refuse alms to none. I objected that this was not only money utterly thrown away, and of which the truly poor man was thus deprived; but that this custom contributed to multiplying the tramps and vagabonds who are happy in that sluggish trade, and, making themselves a burden to society, further deprive it of the work they could have done.

I can well see, she said, that in the big cities you have adopted the maxims with which accommodating reasoners like to flatter the harshness of the wealthy; you even have adopted their terms. Do you think you can deprive a poor man of his quality as man by giving him the contemptuous name of tramp? Compassionate as you are, how could you bring yourself to use it? Give it up, my friend, that word does not sit well in your mouth; it is more dishonoring to the harsh man who uses it than to the wretch who wears it. I will not opine whether these detractors of alms are right or wrong; but I know this, that my husband who is in no way inferior in good sense to your philosophers, and who has often recounted to me all that they say on this subject to snuff out natural pity in the heart and accustom it to insensibility, has always seemed to me to despise such talk and has not disapproved of my conduct. His reasoning is simple. We suffer, he says, and maintain at great expense multitudes of useless professions several of which serve only to corrupt and spoil morals. To consider the state of beggar merely as a trade, far from having anything of that sort to fear from it, we find in it only what fosters in us the sentiments of interest and humanity that should unite all men. If one chooses to consider it with relation to talent, why would I not reward the eloquence of this beggar who

moves my heart and inclines me to come to his aid, as I pay a Comedian who makes me shed a few sterile tears?[18] If the latter brings me to love another's good deeds, the former induces me to perform some myself: everything one feels watching tragedy is forgotten the moment one exits; but remembering the wretched whom one has relieved gives a pleasure that is forever renewed. If the large quantity of beggars is burdensome to the State, of how many other professions that we encourage and tolerate can the same not be said? It is for the Sovereign to see to it that there are no beggars: but in order to turn them away from their profession*[19] must one render citizens inhuman and denatured? For my part, Julie continued, without knowing what the poor are to the State I know that they are all my brothers, and that I cannot without inexcusable harshness deny them the little aid they ask of me. Most are vagrants, I admit; but I know too well the ills of life not to understand through how many misfortunes an honorable man can be reduced to their lot, and how can I be sure that the stranger who comes to entreat my assistance in God's name and beg for a crust of bread is not, perhaps, that very honorable man all but perishing from misery, and whom my refusal is about to reduce to despair? The alms I have them give out at the door are nothing much. We deny no one a halfcrutz**[20] and a bit of bread, we give a double ration to those who are obviously handicapped. If they find as much in every wealthy house along their road, that is enough to keep them alive as they travel, and that is all one owes to the unknown, passing beggar. Even if that were not a real help to them, it at least testifies to the interest we take in their troubles, it mitigates the harshness of a refusal, it is a sort of greeting we give them. A halfcrutz and a bit of bread hardly cost more to give and are more honest gifts than a *God help you*; as if God's gifts were not in the hands of men, and he had other granaries on earth than the stores of the rich? Finally, whatever one may think of these unfortunates, if we owe nothing to the tramp who begs, at least we owe it to ourselves to honor suffering mankind or its image, and not to harden our hearts at the sight of these miseries.

* To feed beggars, they say, is to create seed beds of thieves; and quite to the contrary, that is what it prevents them from becoming. I admit that the poor should not be encouraged to become beggars, but once that is what they are, they must be fed, lest they become thieves. Nothing so argues a change of profession as inability to make a living in one's own: moreover, all those who have once tasted of this idle trade acquire such an aversion to work that they would rather steal and get themselves hanged than to revert to the use of their two arms. A farthing is soon begged and refused, but twenty farthings would have paid the supper of a poor man whom twenty refusals might exasperate. Who would ever wish to refuse such trifling alms if it occurred to him that it might save two men, one from crime and the other from death? I read somewhere that beggars are a vermin that attaches itself to the rich. It is natural for children to attach themselves to their fathers; but these opulent and harsh fathers refuse to recognize them, and leave to the poor the task of feeding them.

** A small coin of the region.

That is how I deal with those who beg, as it were, without pretext and in good faith: as for those who say they are workers and complain that they lack work, there are always tools and work awaiting them here. With this method we help them, we put their good will to the test, and the liars know it so well that none show up here any more.

Thus it is, Milord, that this angelic soul always finds in her virtues the means of combatting the vain subtleties that cruel people use to cloak their vices. All these cares and similar ones she ranks among her pleasures, and they fill a part of the time left over from her most cherished duties. When, after acquitting herself of all she owes to others, she then turns her attention to herself, what she does to make her life agreeable can still be counted among her virtues; so praiseworthy and honest is her motive, and such temperance and reason is there in everything she grants to her desires! She wishes to please her husband who likes to see her contented and gay; she wishes to inspire in her children a taste for the innocent pleasures that moderation, order, and simplicity enhance, and that divert the heart from impetuous passions. She entertains herself to entertain them, as the dove softens in her stomach the grain she will feed to her young.

Julie's soul and body are equally sensible. The same delicacy reigns in her sentiments and in her members. She was made to know and taste all pleasures, and she long so dearly loved virtue itself only as the sweetest of sensual delights. Now that she experiences that supreme delight in peace, she denies herself none of those that can accompany it; but her manner of savoring them resembles the austerity of those who abstain from them, and for her the art of enjoyment is that of privations; not those difficult and painful privations that wrong nature and whose foolish homage the author of nature disdains, but passing and moderate privations, which preserve the empire of reason, and by serving as seasoning to pleasure preclude its distaste and abuse. She contends that whatever proceeds from the senses and is not necessary to life changes in nature the minute it turns into a habit, that it ceases to be a pleasure when it becomes a need, that it is at the same time a chain we impose on ourselves and an enjoyment we deprive ourselves of, and that forever anticipating desires is the art not of satisfying but of stifling them. The only one she applies in order to give value to the slightest things is to deny them to herself twenty times for the once she enjoys them. This simple soul thus preserves her primary drive; her taste does not go flat; she never needs to revive it through excess, and I often see her savor with delight a child's pleasure that would be insipid to anyone else.

A nobler objective to which she further aspires thereby is to remain mistress of herself, to accustom her passions to obedience, and bend all her

desires to the rule. This is a new way for a woman to be happy, for one enjoys without anxiety only what one can lose without pain, and if true happiness belongs to the sage, that is because he is of all men the one from whom fortune can take the least away.

What seems most singular to me about her temperance is that she adheres to it for the same reasons that propel voluptuaries into excess. Life is short, it is true, she says; this is a reason to make use of it to the end, and to play out its duration artfully so as to make the most possible of it. If one day of satiety costs us a year of enjoyment, it is a poor philosophy always to go as far as desire leads us, without considering whether we will not come to the end of our faculties sooner than to the end of our life span, and whether our exhausted heart will not die before we do. I can see that those vulgar epicurians for never wanting to miss an opportunity miss them all, and always bored in the lap of pleasures never know how to experience a single one. They squander the time they think they are saving up, and ruin themselves like misers because they do not know how to lose anything purposefully. I do very well by the opposite maxim, and I believe that I would yet prefer on this point too much severity to too much leniency. Sometimes I break off an outing for the sole reason that I enjoy it too much; by resuming it later I enjoy it twice. However, I work at maintaining the control of my will over myself, and I would rather be accused of capriciousness than allow myself to be governed by my fancies.

There is the principle on which they base here the good things of life, and those that are purely for pleasure. Julie has a liking for fine food, and in the attention she devotes to all the parts of her household, food above all is not neglected. The table reflects the general plenty, but this plenty is not ruinous; in it prevails a sensuality without refinement; all dishes are common, but each excellent in its kind, their preparation is simple and yet exquisite. All that is just for show, all that is dictated by opinion, all the dainty and refined dishes, the whole value of which lies in their rarity and which have to be named to seem good, are forever banished, and even in the delicacy and choice of those they allow themselves, they abstain on a daily basis from certain things they reserve to lend to a few meals a festive air that makes them more agreeable though not more expensive. What would you believe these soberly withheld dishes to be? Rare game? Salt-water fish? Foreign foods? Better than all that. Some excellent local vegetable, some one of the savory greens that grow in our gardens, certain lake fish prepared in a certain manner, certain cheeses from our mountains, some German-style pastry, to which is added some piece of game brought in by the household servants; that is all the special fare to be noticed; that is what covers and decorates the table, stimulates and satisfies

our appetite on days of celebration; the service is modest and rustic, but tidy and cheerful, grace and pleasure are in evidence, joy and appetite give it spice; gilt centerpieces around which the guests are dying of hunger, pompous crystals laden with flowers as sole dessert do not take the place of food, here they know not the art of feeding the stomach through the eyes; but they know the art of adding charm to good fare, eating plenty without reaching the point of discomfort, making merry with drink without impairing their reason, staying long at table without becoming bored, and rising always without distaste.

On the first storey is a small dining room separate from the one where we ordinarily dine, which is on the ground floor. This particular room is in the corner of the house and lighted on two sides. On one it faces the garden, beyond which you can see the lake through the trees; from the other you see that great hillside of vineyards which is beginning to display the riches that will be harvested there in two months. This room is small but decorated with everything that can make it pleasant and cheerful. This is where Julie gives her little banquets for her father, her husband, her cousin, and me, for herself, and sometimes for her children. When she orders the table be set there, everyone knows in advance what this means, and Monsieur de Wolmar calls it in jest the Salon d'Apollon; but this salon differs no less from that of Lucullus in the choice of Guests than in the choice of food.[21] Mere visitors are not admitted there; never do we eat there when we have strangers present; it is the inviolable sanctuary of trust, friendship, freedom. The companionship of hearts there binds the table companions; it is a sort of initiation to intimacy, and never are assembled there any but people who would wish never again to be separated. Milord, the feast awaits you, and it is in this room that you will take your first repast.

I did not at first have the same honor. It was only upon my return from Madame d'Orbe's that I was treated to the Salon d'Apollon. I did not imagine that they could add anything obliging to the welcome they had given me: but this supper gave me other ideas. There I found an indescribably delightful mixture of familiarity, of pleasure, of union, of comfort, that I had not previously experienced. I felt more free although no one had told me I should be; it seemed to me that we understood each other better than before. The absence of domestics invited me to dispense with the reservations in my heart, and it is there that at Julie's behest I resumed the practice relinquished years earlier of drinking straight wine with my hosts at the end of the repast.

That supper enchanted me. I would have wished that all our meals had taken place in this manner. I was not yet acquainted with this charming

room, said I to Madame de Wolmar; why do you not always eat here? You see, she said, how pretty it is! Would it not be a pity to spoil it? This answer seemed too removed from her character for me not to suspect it had some hidden meaning. Why at least, I replied, do you not always surround yourself with the same amenities we find here, so that your domestics can be sent away and we can converse more freely? The reason is, she answered once more, that it would be too agreeable, and that the tedium of always being at ease is ultimately the worst of all. It took no more for me to understand her system, and I judged that, indeed, the art of spicing pleasures is merely that of hoarding them.

I find that she dresses with more care than she once did. The sole vanity ever imputed to her was neglect of her attire. The proud woman had her reasons, and left me no pretext for underestimating her sway. But no matter what she did, the enchantment was too strong to seem natural to me; I persisted in seeing art in her negligence; had she coiffed herself in a bag, I would still have accused her of coquetry. She would have no less power today; but she disdains to use it, and I would say that she affects a more contrived adornment in order to seem nothing more than a pretty woman, if I had not discovered the cause of this new attention. It fooled me the first few days, and without it occurring to me that she was dressed no differently from the day I arrived without being expected, I dared attribute to myself the honor of this refinement. I got over my mistake during Monsieur de Wolmar's absence. Gone the very next day was the previous day's elegance of which the eye could not tire, and the touching and voluptuous simplicity that used to intoxicate me. In its place was a certain modesty that speaks to the heart through the eyes, inspires only respect, and that beauty renders more imposing. The dignity of wife and mother prevailed in all her charms; that timid and tender look had become more solemn; and one would have said that a grander and nobler air had veiled the softness of her features. Not that there was the slightest alteration in her deportment nor in her manners; her even temper, her candor never admitted grimaces. She was simply making use of the talent natural to women for occasionally changing our sentiments and ideas by means of a different attire, another form of headdress, a gown of another color, and exerting on hearts the empire of taste by making something out of nothing. The day she was expecting her husband's return, she rediscovered the art of heightening her natural graces without covering them; she was dazzling when her toilet was finished; I saw that she knew no less how to outshine the most brilliant ornaments than to adorn the simplest, and I said to myself in spite when I identified the object of her attentions: did she ever do this much for love?

This taste for ornaments extends from the mistress of the house to all its members. The master, the children, the domestics, the horses, the buildings, the gardens, the furniture, everything is maintained with a care that shows they are not beneath magnificence, but that they scorn it. Or rather, magnificence is indeed present, if it is true that it consists less in the richness of certain things than in a fine organization of the whole, which denotes the concert of the parts and the unity of the organizer's intentions.* For my part, I find that it is at least a grander and nobler idea to see a small number of people happy with a common happiness in a simple and modest house than to see discord and turmoil reigning in a palace, with its every inhabitant seeking his happiness and fortune in the ruin of another and the general disorder. The well-run house is a unit, and forms a whole pleasant to behold: in the palace one finds but an untidy assemblage of various items, whose interconnection is merely apparent. At first glance one thinks one sees a common end; at closer look one is quickly undeceived.

To go by only the most natural impression, it would seem that in order to eschew splendor and luxury one requires not so much moderation as taste. Symmetry and regularity pleases every eye. The image of well-being and felicity touches the human heart which is hungry for it: but what idea favorable to the person flaunting it can a vain ostentation with no connection to order or happiness and no purpose but to impress the eye, evoke in the observer's mind? The idea of taste? Does not taste appear a hundred times better in simple things than in those that are smothered in riches? The idea of commodiousness? Is there anything less commodious than ostentation?**[22] The idea of grandeur? It is precisely the opposite. When I see that someone has set out to build a large palace, I immediately ask myself why that palace is not larger? Why does a man with fifty domestics not have a hundred? Why is that lovely silver service not gold? Why does this

* This appears to me incontestable. There is magnificence in the symmetry of a great Palace; there is none in a jumble of houses piled pell-mell on top of each other. There is magnificence in the uniform of a Regiment in battle; there is none in the populace that watches it, although there is perhaps not a single man amidst it whose dress taken individually is not finer than a soldier's. In a word, genuine magnificence is merely order made perceptible on a large scale; for which reason of all the imaginable spectacles the most magnificent is that of nature.

** The commotion of the servants in a house forever disturbs the master's peace. He can hide nothing from so many Arguses. The multitude of his creditors makes him pay dearly that of his admirers. His apartments are so superb that he is forced to sleep in a storage closet in order to be comfortable, and his monkey is sometimes better lodged than he. If he wishes to dine, he is dependent on his cook and never on his hunger; if he wishes to go out, he is at the mercy of his horses; a thousand obstacles halt him in the streets; he is desperate to arrive and has forgotten he has legs. Chloé is awaiting him, the mud daunts him, the weight of gold in his costume is weighing him down, and he cannot walk twenty paces on foot: but if he misses an assignation with his mistress, he is well repaid by the passers-by: everyone recognizes his livery, admires it, and exclaims that it is Monsieur so-and-so.

man who gilds his carriage not gild his panelling? If his panelling is gilded why is not his roof? The man who set out to build a tall tower did well to try to make it reach Heaven[23]; otherwise it would have been useless to build it; the point at which he would have stopped would have served only to demonstrate his powerlessness from further away. O petty, vain man, show me thy power, I will show thee thy misery!

On the contrary, an order of things in which nothing is conceded to opinion, in which everything has a real utility that is limited to the true needs of nature, offers not only a spectacle approved by reason, but one that satisfies the eye and the heart, in that man there sees himself only in agreeable perspectives, as being self-sufficient, that the image of his weakness is not apparent, and that this cheerful tableau never induces dispiriting reflections. I defy any man in his right mind to observe for one solid hour the palace of a prince and the ostentation it exudes without falling into melancholy and deploring the fate of mankind. But the sight of this house and of the uniform and simple life of its inhabitants imparts to the soul of onlookers a secret charm that grows and grows. A small number of gentle and peaceable people, united by mutual needs and reciprocal beneficence, here work together through various tasks toward a common goal: each one finding in his own station everything needed to be content with it and not desire to leave it, each becomes attached to it as a lifelong commitment, and his sole remaining ambition is to perform his duties well. There is such moderation in those who command and such zeal in those who obey that equals could have distributed among themselves the same functions without any one of them complaining of his lot.[24] Thus no one envies someone else's; no one believes he can increase his fortune otherwise than by an increase in the common weal; the masters themselves gauge their happiness only by that of the people around them. One would not know what to add or subtract here, because one finds only useful things and all such things are present, so that one wishes for nothing one does not see, and there is nothing one sees of which it can be said, why is there not more of it? Add galloons, tableaux, a chandelier, gilt, immediately you will impoverish everything. Perceiving such plenty in the necessaries, and no trace of superfluity, one is led to believe that if it is not here that is because they did not want it here, and if they wanted it, it would reign with the same profusion: Perceiving goods continually flowing out the door for the assistance of the poor, one is led to say: this house cannot contain all its riches. That, it seems to me, is genuine magnificence.

These signs of opulence alarmed even me, once I had learned what there was to support it. You are ruining yourselves, I said to Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar. Such a modest revenue cannot possibly sustain such

expenditures. They laughed, and pointed out to me that, without cutting anything from their household budget, if they wanted to they could economize considerably and increase their revenue rather than ruining themselves. Our great secret for being rich, they told me, is to have little money, and to avoid as much as possible, in the way we handle our goods, intermediary exchanges between the product and its use. No such exchanges take place without loss, and such losses multiplied reduce rather considerable means to almost nothing, just as being traded about turns a lovely golden casket into a thin bauble. Transportation of our revenues is avoided by using them on the premises, exchange further is avoided by consuming them in kind, and in the indispensable conversion of what we have left over into what we are lacking, in lieu of monetary sales and purchases that double the losses, we try to make real exchanges in which each contractor's convenience takes for both the place of profit.[25]

I perceive, I said, the advantages of this method; but it does not appear to me without drawbacks. Besides the unwelcome concerns it subjects you to, the profit must be more apparent than real, and what you lose in the detail of the management of your goods probably exceeds the gain your Farmers[26] would make with you: for the work will always be done more economically and the harvest more carefully by a peasant than by you. There you are wrong, Wolmar answered me; the peasant worries less about increasing the yield than saving on the expenses, because the loans are always more onerous to him than the profits are useful; as his objective is not so much to valorize a property as to incur little expense for it, if he procures an actual gain from it, it is much less by improving the land than by exhausting it, and the best that can happen is that instead of exhausting it he neglects it. Thus for a little cash collected without difficulty, an idle landowner stores up for himself or for his children great losses, great labors, and sometimes the ruin of his patrimony.

Moreover, Monsieur de Wolmar continued, I do not deny that I cultivate at greater expense than would a farmer; but also it is I who reap the farmer's profit, and this cultivation being much superior the product is much greater; so that by spending more, I never fail to profit further. What is more, this excess of expenditure is only apparent and really produces a very great savings; for, if others farmed our lands, we would be idle; we would have to live in the city, life would be more expensive there, we would require entertainments that would cost us much more than those we find here and for which we would care less. Those concerns you call unwelcome supply both our duties and our pleasures; thanks to the foresight with which we dispose them, they are never onerous; they replace for us a plethora of ruinous fancies for which country life prevents or

destroys the taste, and everything that contributes to our well-being for us becomes an amusement.

Look around you, added this judicious paterfamilias, you will see nothing but useful things, which cost us practically nothing and spare us a thousand needless expenses. Our own commodities alone grace our table, the local fabrics alone all but account for our furnishings and clothing: nothing is scorned for being common, nothing is valued for being rare. Since anything that comes from afar is subject to being disguised or falsified, we limit ourselves, out of discrimination as much as moderation, to the choice of the best things nearby, the quality of which is not suspect. Our food is simple, but select. All our table would require to be sumptuous is to be served far from here; for everything on it is good, it would all be rare, and a gourmet would probably find the lake trout better if he ate them in Paris.

The same rule applies in the choice of finery, which as you see is not neglected; but only elegance determines it, wealth is never apparent, even less the mode. There is a great difference between the value opinion gives to things and the one they really have. It is only this latter Julie pays attention to, and when it comes to fabric, she does not care so much whether it is old or new as whether it is good and becomes her. Often indeed novelty alone is a reason for her to reject it, when this novelty gives things a value they do not have or cannot possibly retain.

Consider further that here the effect of each item derives less from itself than from its usage and from its consonance with the rest, so that with relatively inexpensive parts Julie has made a whole of great value. Taste likes to create, to give by itself a value to things. As the law of the mode is inconstant and ruinous, so hers is economical and durable. What good taste once approves of is forever fine; if it is rarely stylish, on the other hand it is never ridiculous, and in modest simplicity from the compatibility of elements it derives sure and unalterable rules, which remain when the modes have past.

Add to this finally that an abundance of the strictly necessary cannot degenerate into abuse; because the necessary has its natural limits, and true needs are never excessive. One can sink the expense of twenty suits into a single one, and consume in one meal a whole year's income; but one cannot wear two suits at the same time nor eat dinner twice in a day. Thus opinion is boundless, whereas nature restrains us on every side, and he who in a middling station restricts himself to well-being never risks ruin.

There, my dear man, continued the wise Wolmar, is how with economy and attention one can rise above one's fortune. We could well increase ours without changing our manner of living; for almost no loans are made

here but have a product as their objective, and everything we spend returns to us the means of spending even more.

And yet, Milord, none of all this is apparent at first glance. Everywhere an air of profusion obscures the order that creates it; it takes time to perceive the sumptuary laws that lead to affluence and pleasure, and at first one has a hard time understanding how one can enjoy what one economizes. Upon reflection contentment increases, because one sees that the source is inexhaustible and that the art of savoring life's happiness further serves to prolong it. How could one weary of a state so in conformity with nature? How could one spoil his inheritance by improving it daily? How would one ruin his fortune by consuming only his revenues? When one each year has assurance about the next, who can trouble the peace of the current one? Here the fruit of past labor sustains the present plenty, and the fruit of present labor heralds the plenty to come; one enjoys at the same time what one spends and what one brings in, and the various time frames come together to consolidate the security of the present.

I have looked into all the details of the household and have everywhere found the same spirit in evidence. All the embroidery and lace are made in the gynaeceum; all the canvas is woven in the farmyard or by poor women they provide for. The wool is sent to manufactories from which they obtain in exchange cloth for clothing the servants; wine, oil, and bread are made in house; they have woods regularly cut in as great quantity as they can consume; the butcher takes his pay in livestock, the grocer receives wheat for his supplies; the salary of the laborers and domestics is taken from the product of the acreage under cultivation; the rent from their houses in town suffices to furnish the ones they occupy; interests from public bonds supply the masters' upkeep, and the small quantity of tableware they allow themselves; the sale of leftover wines and the wheat provides a fund they keep in reserve for exceptional expenses; a fund which Julie's prudence never allows to run dry, and which her charity allows even less to increase. For items purely for pleasure, she never allocates anything but the profit from work done in her house, from the lands they have cleared, from the trees they have had planted etc. Thus the product and its distribution always by the nature of things ending up in balance, the equilibrium cannot be upset, and it is impossible for them to find themselves in financial straits.

Further still: the privations she imposes on herself through that temperate sensuality I have mentioned are at the same time new means of pleasure and new opportunities to economize. For example she is very fond of coffee; at her mother's she took some every day. She has given up that habit in order to heighten her taste for it; she has limited herself to taking

coffee only when she has guests, and in the Salon d'Apollon, so as to add this token of festivity to all the others. It is a touch of sensuality that gratifies her more, costs her less, and by which she sharpens and disciplines her craving at the same time. Contrariwise, her attention to anticipating and satisfying her father's and her husband's tastes is unstinting, a natural and gracious prodigality which makes them savor what she offers them better because of the pleasure she derives from offering it to them. Both of them like to prolong the end of a meal somewhat, in the Swiss manner[27]: she never fails after supper to have a bottle of finer wine served, older than their everyday stock. At first I was fooled by the pompous names they gave these wines, which indeed I find excellent, and, drinking them as wines of the places whose names they bore, I chided Julie for so blatant an infraction of her maxims; but she reminded me with a laugh of a passage from Plutarch, where Flaminius compares Antiochus's Asiatic troops, under a thousand barbarous names, to various stews in the guise of which a friend had served him the same meat.[28] It is the same, she said, for these foreign wines you upbraid me for. The rancio, the sherry, the malaga, the chassaigne, the syracuse of which you partake with such pleasure are in fact only wines of Lavaux[29] severally prepared, and you can see from here the vineyard that produces these faraway beverages. Though they are inferior in quality to the famous wines whose names they bear, they have not the same disadvantages, and since we are sure of what goes into them, we can at least drink them without risk. I have reason to believe, she continued, that my father and my husband like them as much as the rarest wines. Hers, then said Monsieur de Wolmar, have for us a flavor the others all lack: it is the pleasure she herself has taken in preparing them. Ah, she replied, they will always be exquisite!

You can well imagine that amidst so many varied chores, there is little room here for that idleness and lack of something to do which make company, the paying of visits, and outside circles necessary. They frequent the neighbors, enough to sustain a pleasant relationship, too little to become enslaved to it. Guests are always welcome and are never longed for. They see only precisely as many people as they need in order to preserve their preference for seclusion; farm activities replace entertainment, and to anyone who finds a pleasant company in his family circle, all others are insipid indeed. The way they spend time here is too simple and too uniform to tempt many people*[30]; but it is because of the disposition of heart of those

* I believe that one of our wits travelling in that country, received and blandished in that house on his passage, would subsequently make a most humorous relation to his friends of the boorish life they lead there. Moreover, I see from the letters of Miladi Catesby that this taste is not peculiar to France, and that it is apparently also the custom in England to ridicule one's hosts, in repayment for their hospitality.

who have adopted it that it interests them. With a sound soul, can one tire of discharging the dearest and most charming duties of mankind, and making each other's life happy? Every evening Julie, satisfied with her day, desires nothing different for the morrow, and every morning she asks heaven for a day like the one before: she does always the same things because they are good, and she knows nothing better to do. No doubt she thus savors all the felicity man is allowed. Is not being content in the continuation of one's state a sure sign that one lives happily therein?[31]

Though we rarely see here those droves of idlers who go by the name of good company, all who gather here engage the heart through some advantageous facet, and redeem a few silly traits with a thousand virtues. Peaceable country folk devoid of polish or politeness; but good, simple, honest, and content with their lot; former officers retired from the service; merchants bored with getting rich; prudent mothers who bring their daughters to the school of modesty and good morals; such is the following Julie likes to gather round her. Her husband is not displeased on occasion to invite in some of those adventurers reformed by age and experience, who, having gained wisdom at their own expense, return without regret to farm their father's field they wish they had never left. If one of them relates at table the events of his life, they are not the marvelous adventures of the rich Sinbad recounting in the lap of oriental indolence how he won his treasures: it is the simpler narratives of reasonable folk whom fate's whims and men's injustices have turned away from the vain pursuit of false goods, in order to give them back the taste for true ones.

Would you believe that even conversation with peasants has charms for these lofty souls from whom the sage would be pleased to take instruction? The judicious Wolmar finds in village naiveté characters more distinct, more men thinking for themselves than under the uniform mask of city denizens, where every individual shows himself as the others are, rather than as he is himself. The tender Julie finds in them hearts appreciative of the simplest caresses, and which deem themselves happy for the interest she takes in their happiness. Neither their heart nor their spirit is fashioned by art; they have not learned to pattern themselves on our example, and one does not fear to find in them the man of man, rather than the man of nature.

Often in his rounds Monsieur de Wolmar encounters some good Oldster whose sense and reason he is struck by, and whom he likes to question. He takes him home to his wife; she gives him a charming welcome, which denotes, not politeness and airs of her station, but the benevolence and humanity of her character. The old fellow is asked to stay for dinner. Julie seats him beside her, serves him, cajoles him, talks to him interest-

edly, inquires about his family, his business, does not smile at his embarrassment, pays no undue mind to his rustic manners, but puts him at ease by the informality of her own, and never fails with him in that tender and touching respect owed to an infirm old age honored by a life long lived without reproach. The delighted oldster lets his heart overflow; he seems to recover for a moment the petulance of his youth. The wine drunk to the health of a young Lady warms his half-congealed blood all the better. He revives in speaking of his former times, his loves, his campaigns, battles in which he took part, the courage of his countrymen, his return home, his wife, his children, the labors in the field, the abuses he has observed, the remedies he imagines. Often there emerge from the lengthy prattle of his age excellent moral precepts, or lessons in agriculture; and were there nothing in the things he says but the pleasure he takes in saying them, Julie would take pleasure in hearing them.

She goes after dinner to her room and brings back a little present, some furnishing suitable for the old fellow's wife or daughters. She has her children offer it, and in return he gives the children some simple gift for their age which she has secretly placed in his hands for them. Thus is brought about at an early stage the close and sweet benevolence that establishes the tie between the various estates. The children become accustomed to honoring old age, respecting simple folk, and recognizing merit in all ranks. The peasants, seeing their old fathers fêted in a respectable house and admitted to the masters' table, do not feel at all offended at being themselves excluded from it; they do not blame their rank but their age; they do not say, we are too poor, but, we are too young to be treated thus: the honor one renders to their oldsters and the hope of some day sharing in it console them for being excluded and inspire them to become worthy of it.

Meanwhile, the good old fellow, still melting at the blandishments he has received, returns to his cottage, eager to show his wife and children the gifts he brings them. These trifles sow joy among a whole family which sees that someone has deigned to pay them some heed. He recounts to them pompously the reception he has been given, the dishes he has been served, the wines he has tasted, the obliging things that were said to him, how much they had been inquired about, the masters' affability, the servants' attentions, and generally whatever can give some value to the tokens of esteem and kindness he has received; recounting this, he enjoys it a second time, and the whole household seems equally to enjoy the honors rendered to its head. They all bless in concert this illustrious and generous family which offers an example to the great and refuge to the small, which disdains not the poor and honors gray hair. Such is the incense that pleases beneficent souls. If there are human blessings Heaven deigns to fulfill, it is surely not those extracted by flattery and grovelling in the presence of the

very persons being praised; but those secretly uttered by a simple and grateful heart beside a rustic hearth.

So it is that an agreeable and sweet sentiment can cover with its charm a life insipid to indifferent hearts: so it is that cares, labors, seclusion can become entertainments through the art of conducting them. A sound soul can give a taste to common occupations, as the health of the body makes the simplest foods seem good. All those bored people who are so hard to entertain owe their distaste to their vices, and lose the sentiment of pleasure only along with that of duty. In Julie's case, precisely the opposite occurred, and cares which a certain languor of soul would formerly have allowed her to neglect take on an interest for her through the motivation that inspires them. One would have to be insensible to be forever devoid of animation. Hers came to be through the same causes that formerly repressed it. Her heart sought retreat and solitude in order to indulge peacefully in the affections that absorbed it; now she has taken up a new activity by entering into new bonds. She is not the indolent sort of materfamilias, content to study when action is required, who waste in acquainting themselves with others' duties the time they should spend fulfilling their own. She practices today what she was formerly learning. She no longer studies, she no longer reads; she acts. As she arises an hour later than her husband, she also goes to bed an hour later. This hour is the only time she still devotes to study, and to her the day never seems long enough for all the ministries she likes to fill it with.

There, Milord, is what I had to tell you about the economy of this house, and about the private life of the masters who govern it. Content with their lot, they enjoy it peaceably; content with their fortune, they do not strive to increase it for their children; but to leave to them along with the inheritance they have received, lands in good condition, devoted domestics, the taste for work, order, moderation, and all that can render sweet and charming to reasonable people the enjoyment of a modest estate, as wisely preserved as it has been honestly acquired.

*LETTER III**

To Milord Edward

We have had guests these last few days. They departed yesterday, and we are recommencing among the three of us a company all the more charming in that nothing has remained in our hearts that we wish to hide

* Two Letters written at different times turned on the subject of this one, which occasioned numerous needless repetitions. In order to eliminate them, I have combined these two Letters into a single one. Moreover, without pretending to justify the excessive length of

from each other. What pleasure I taste in reassuming a new being that renders me worthy of your confidence! I receive no mark of esteem from Julie and her husband without saying to myself with a certain pride of soul: finally I will dare reveal myself to him. It is thanks to your ministries, it is under your eyes that I hope to subordinate my past faults to my present state. If spent love casts the soul into exhaustion, subjugated love confers on it along with conscience of its triumph a new elevation, and a more intense attraction for all that is grand and beautiful. Would one wish to lose the fruit of a sacrifice that has cost us so dearly? No, Milord, I sense that after your example my heart is going to put to profit all the ardent sentiments it has overcome. I sense that it is only by having been what I was that I can become what I mean to be.

After six days wasted in frivolous discussions with indifferent people, we have today spent a morning in the English manner, gathered in silence, enjoying at once the pleasure of being together and the bliss of contemplation.[32] How few people know the delights of that state! I saw no one in France who had the slightest notion of it. Conversation among friends never runs dry, they say. It is true, the tongue furnishes mediocre attachments with a facile babble. But friendship, Milord, friendship! Powerful and heavenly sentiment, what words are worthy of thee? What tongue dares be thine interpreter? Can what one says to one's friend ever equal what one feels by his side? Oh God! How many things a clasped hand, a spirited look, a warm embrace, the sigh that follows it say, and how cold after all that is the first word that is uttered! O the late evenings of Besançon![33] Moments devoted to silence and treasured up by friendship! O Bomston! great soul, sublime friend! No, I have not belittled what you did for me, and my lips have never said a word of it to you.

It is certain that this state of contemplation constitutes one of the great charms of sensible men. But I have always found that outsiders keep one from enjoying it, and that friends need to be without witnesses if they are to be free to say nothing to each other, as they wish. They need to be collected, so to speak, within each other: the slightest distractions are dismaying, the slightest constraint is unbearable. If the heart sometimes brings a word to the lips, how sweet to be able to utter it without second thoughts. It seems one dares think freely only when one can similarly speak: it seems that the presence of a single stranger holds back sentiment, and oppresses souls that would consort so well without him.

Two hours thus went by between us in this ecstatic immobility, a thou-

several of the letters that make up this collection, I will observe that the letters of solitary folk are lengthy and few; those of worldly people frequent and brief. One needs merely to notice this difference in order instantly to sense the reason for it.

sand times sweeter than the cold repose of Epicurus's Gods.[34] After breakfast, the children came as usual into their mother's room[35]; but instead of going next and closing herself in with them in the gynaeceum as was her wont, in order to make amends to us in some sense for the time lost without seeing us, she had them remain with her, and we did not separate until dinnertime. Henriette who is beginning to know how to handle a needle, was working seated in front of Fanchon who was making lace, her cushion resting on the back of her little chair. The two boys were at a table leafing through a book of prints, the subjects of which the elder was explaining to his younger brother. When he made a mistake, Henriette, alert and knowing the book by heart, made a point of correcting him. Often pretending not to know which print they were looking at, she used it as a pretext to get up, going and coming from her chair to the table and from the table to her chair. These perambulations were not something she disliked and always drew her some playful provocation from the little hubby; sometimes he even added a little kiss, which his childish mouth hardly knows yet how to apply, but Henriette, already more expert, does not mind his clumsiness. During these little lessons which were given and received without much care, but also without the slightest inhibition, the younger was furtively counting boxwood jackstraws, which he had hidden under the book.

Madame de Wolmar was embroidering by the window opposite the children; her husband and I were still at the tea table reading the gazette, to which she was paying rather little attention. But on the topic of the French king's illness and his people's singular attachment to him, which never had its equal but in the attachment of the Romans for Germanicus,[36] she made several observations on the good natural disposition of that gentle and benevolent nation which all the others hate but which hates none, adding that she envied sovereigns only the pleasure of making themselves beloved. Envy nothing, her husband said in a tone of voice he should have left to me; we have all long been your subjects. At this word, her needlework fell from her hands; she turned her head, and cast on her husband such a touching look, so tender, that I myself thrilled at it. She said nothing: what could she have said to equal that look? Our eyes also met. I could tell from the way her husband clasped my hand that we were all three caught up in the same emotion, and that the sweet influence of that expansive soul was acting around her, and overcoming insensibility itself.

It was in this frame of mind that the silence I was speaking of began; you can well imagine that it was not one of coldness and boredom. It was interrupted only by the children's little frolics; even then, the minute we stopped talking, they moderated their chatter in imitation, as if fearing to disturb the general contemplation. It was the little Superintendent who first

9. Morning in the English manner.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

started lowering her voice, gesturing to the others, running on tiptoe, and their games became all the more amusing because this slight constraint added a new interest to them. This spectacle which seemed to be placed under our eyes in order to prolong our own emotion produced its natural effect.

Ammutiscon le lingue, et parlan l'alme.[37]

The tongues fall silent, and the souls speak.

How many things were said without opening the lips! How many ardent sentiments were transmitted without the cold agency of speech! Insensibly Julie allowed herself to become absorbed in the one that dominated all the others. Her eyes became completely riveted on her three children, and her heart ravished by such a delightful ecstasy brightened her charming face with all that was ever most touching in a mother's tenderness.

Ourselves absorbed in this double spectacle, Wolmar and I allowed ourselves to be drawn into our daydreams, when the children, who were their cause, brought them to an end. The elder, who was enjoying the prints, seeing that the jackstraws kept his brother from paying attention, picked the moment when he had gathered them up, and dealing him a blow on the hand, scattered them all over the room. Marcellin began to cry, and without doing anything to make him to stop, Madame de Wolmar told Fanchon to take away the jackstraws. The child immediately quieted down, but the jackstraws were none the less taken away, nor did he begin crying again as I had expected. This circumstance which was nothing in itself recalled to my mind several others to which I had paid no attention, and I do not remember, now that I think about it, ever seeing children to whom so little was said and who were less troublesome. They practically never leave their mother's side, and one hardly notices that they are there. They are lively, thoughtless, frisky, as befits their age, never importunate or boisterous, and one can see they are discreet before they have learnt what discretion is.[38] What astonished me the most of the reflections this subject induced in me was that this took place as if of itself, and that with such an intense tenderness for her children, Julie fussed so little about them. Indeed, one never sees her urge them to speak or to keep quiet, nor prescribe or forbid them this or that. She never argues with them, she does not contrary them in their games; one would think she was content to see them and love them, and that when they have spent their day with her, her whole duty as mother is fulfilled.

Although this peaceful tranquillity seemed to me more pleasant to take in than the anxious solicitude of other mothers, I was nonetheless struck by an indolence that sat ill with my ideas. I would have wished her not so

fulfilled despite so much cause for being so: superfluous activity so becomes a mother's love! I would have liked to attribute all the good I saw in her children to her care; I would have wished they owed less to nature and more to their mother, I would almost have rather they had shortcomings in order to see her more intent on correcting them.

After occupying myself with these reflections for a long while in silence, I broke it to share them with her. I see, I told her, that Heaven rewards mothers' virtue with the children's good natural dispositions: but this disposition needs to be cultivated. It is at birth that their education must begin. Is there a better time for forming them, than when they have not yet any form to destroy? If you leave them to themselves from infancy, at what age will you expect them to show some docility? Even if you had nothing to teach them, they should be taught to obey you. Do you, replied she, notice them disobeying me? They hardly could, I said, when you give them no orders. She began to smile looking at her husband, and taking me by the hand, she led me into the study, where the three of us could converse without being heard by the children.

It was there that, explaining her maxims to me at leisure, she led me to see under this semblance of negligence the most vigilant attention that a mother's tenderness ever paid. For a long time, she said, I had the same opinion as you about premature instruction, and during my first pregnancy, frightened by all my duties and the cares I would soon have to discharge, I often discussed them anxiously with Monsieur de Wolmar. What better guide could I take in this matter than an enlightened observer, who combined a father's interest with a philosopher's detachment? He fulfilled and surpassed my expectation; he dissipated my prejudices and taught me how to secure for myself a much more extended success with less anguish. He made me appreciate that the first and most important education, the one precisely that everyone overlooks,*[39] is to prepare a child for receiving instruction. A mistake common to all parents who take pride in their enlightenment is to suppose their children reasonable at birth, and talk to them as if they were men even before they can talk. Reason is the instrument they think they can use for instruction, whereas it is the one the other instruments must serve to fashion, and of all the branches of learning proper to man, the one he acquires last and with the greatest difficulty is reason itself.[40] By addressing them from their tenderest age in a language they do not understand, we accustom them to being satisfied with words, and satisfying others with them, to contesting everything we say to them, to thinking they are as wise as their masters, to becoming argumen-

* Locke himself, the wise Locke overlooked it; he states much more what must be demanded of children than what must be done to obtain it.

tative and rebellious, and everything we think we can obtain from them with reasonable motives we can in fact obtain only with motives of fear or vanity which we are always obliged to append.

There is no patience that a child whom one tries to raise in this way does not ultimately wear down; and that is how, bored, discouraged, exasperated by the endless importunity the habit of which they have themselves passed on to them, the parents, no longer able to bear the annoyance of dealing with the children, are obliged to get rid of them by turning them over to masters; as if one could ever expect from a Preceptor more patience and gentleness than a father can have.

Nature, Julie continued, would have it that children are children before they are men. If we want to pervert that order, we will produce precocious fruits lacking both maturity and savor, which will soon rot; we will have young savants and old children. Childhood has ways of seeing, thinking, feeling which are proper to it. Nothing is less reasonable than trying to substitute ours for theirs, and I would as soon require a child to be five feet tall as to have judgment at age ten.[41]

Reason begins to take shape only after several years, and when the body has assumed a certain consistency. Nature's intention is then that the body be strengthened before the mind comes into play. Children are always in motion; repose and reflection are the aversion of their age; a studious and sedentary life keeps them from growing and thriving; neither their mind nor their body can bear constraint. Forever closed up in a room with books, they lose all their vigor; they become delicate, feeble, sickly, rather stultified than reasonable; and the soul is affected for life by the atrophy of the body.[42]

Were all these kinds of premature instruction to benefit their judgment as much as they harm it, still there would be a considerable disadvantage in giving them indistinctly, and without regard to which ones preferentially suit each child's genius.[43] In addition to the constitution common to the species, each individual brings with him at birth a particular temperament which determines his genius and character, and should be neither changed nor constrained, but formed and perfected. All characters are good and sound in themselves, according to Monsieur de Wolmar. There are, he says, no mistakes in nature.*[44] All the vices we attribute to natural disposition are the effect of the wrong shapes it has received.[45] There is no villain whose inclinations better channelled would not have yielded great virtues. There is no wronghead from whom useful talents would not have been obtained from it by taking a certain tack with him, like those misshapen

* It surprises me to find this doctrine, so true, in Monsieur de Wolmar; it will soon be seen why.

and monstrous figures one makes beautiful and well-proportioned by looking at them from the right angle.[46] Everything works together for the common good in the universal system. Every man has his assigned place in the best order of things, the question is to find that place and not pervert that order.[47] What is the result of an education begun in the cradle and always under the same formula, without regard to the prodigious diversity of minds? That we give most of them damaging or inappropriate instruction, that we deprive them of that which would be appropriate, that we thwart nature at every turn, that we obliterate the soul's great qualities, to put in their place small and illusory ones having no reality; that by indiscriminately training so many diverse talents for the same things we obliterate the ones with the others, and cannot tell them apart; that after so much care wasted by spoiling in children the true gifts of nature, this fleeting and frivolous luster that we prefer to them is soon tarnished, without the stifled natural disposition ever reappearing; that we lose at once what we have destroyed and what we have accomplished; that finally as reward for so much effort indiscreetly expended, all these little prodigies turn out as minds devoid of strength and men devoid of merit, remarkable solely for their weakness and their uselessness.

I understand these maxims, I said to Julie; but I find it difficult to reconcile them with your own sentiments on the meager advantage to be had by developing each individual's genius and natural talents, either for his own happiness, or for the true good of society. Would it not be infinitely preferable to posit a perfect model of the reasonable and honorable man; then bring each child as close as possible to this model through the power of education, by stimulating the one, and holding back the next, by suppressing passions, by perfecting reason, by correcting nature.... Correcting nature! said Wolmar interrupting me; that's a fine word; but before using it, you should have answered to what Julie just said.[48]

A very peremptory answer, it seemed to me, was to deny the principle; which is what I did. You always suppose that this diversity of minds and geniuses that distinguishes individuals is nature's doing; and that is nothing less than evident. For finally, if minds are different they are unequal, and if nature has made them unequal, it is by endowing some in preference to others with somewhat more delicacy of the senses, memory capacity, or ability to concentrate. Now as for senses and memory, it is proven by experience that their various degrees of capacity and perfection are not the measure of men's minds; and as for ability to concentrate, it depends solely on the strength of the passions that impel us, and it is again proven that all men are by their nature susceptible of passions strong enough to

endow them with the degree of concentration to which superiority of mind is attached.

And if the diversity of minds, instead of coming from nature, were an effect of education, that is to say, of the various ideas, of the various sentiments provoked in us from infancy by the objects that strike us, the circumstances we find ourselves in, and all the impressions we receive; far from waiting to raise children until we knew the character of their mind, we should on the contrary hasten to determine that character properly, through an education devised for the one we want to give them.[49]

To that he replied that his method was not to deny what he saw, when he could not explain it. Look, he said, at those two dogs in the courtyard. They are from the same litter; they have been fed and treated in the same way; they have never been separated: yet one of the two is lively, frolicsome, affectionate, full of intelligence: the other dumb, lumpish, grumpy, and we have never been able to teach him anything. The sole difference of temperaments has produced in them that of characters, as the sole difference of inner organization produces in us that of minds[50]; everything else has been the same.... The same? I interrupted; what difference? How many small objects have acted on the one and not the other! How many small circumstances have struck them variously, without your taking notice? Lovely, he rejoined; there you are reasoning like the astrologers. Whenever they were confronted with the objection that two men born under the same aspect have widely divergent fortunes, they would categorically reject that identity. They would maintain that, given the rapid movement of the heavens, there was an immense distance from the theme[51] of one of these men to the other's, and that, if the two precise moments of birth could have been recorded, the objection would have turned into a proof.

Pray let us leave aside all these subtleties, and stick to observation. It teaches us that there are characters that declare themselves almost at birth, and infants we can study on their nurses' breast. Those are a separate category, who start to learn the minute their life begins. But as for the others who develop less quickly, trying to form their mind before knowing it is to risk spoiling the good that nature has done and doing more harm in its place. Did not Plato your master maintain that all human knowledge, all philosophy could extract from a human soul nothing but what nature had put there; just as all chemical operations have never extracted from any composite more gold than it already contained?[52] That is true neither of our sentiments nor of our ideas; but it is true of our dispositions for acquiring them. To change a mind, you would have to change its inner organization; to change a character, you would have to change the tempera-

ment it depends upon. Have you ever heard it said that an impetuous man had become phlegmatic, and a cold and methodical mind had acquired imagination? For my part I think it would be just as easy to make a blond man of a brunet, and of an idiot a clever man. So it would be vain to pretend to remold a variety of minds on a common model. You can coerce them and not change them: you can prevent men from showing themselves as they are, but not make them become other; and if they disguise themselves in the ordinary course of life, you will see them in all important occasions revert to their original character, and revert to it with all the less restraint that they know no more restraint when they do so. Once again the question is not to change the character and bend the natural disposition, but on the contrary to push it as far as it can go, to cultivate it and keep it from degenerating; for it is thus that a man becomes all he can be, and that nature's work is culminated in him by education. Now before cultivating the character you must study it, wait patiently for it to reveal itself, provide it many opportunities for revealing itself, and forever abstain from doing anything at all, rather than act unadvisedly.[53] To one genius you must give wings, to another shackles; the one needs be goaded, the other held back; the one needs to be encouraged, and the other intimidated; you should sometimes enlighten, sometimes stupefy. One man is made to carry human knowledge to its utmost degree; to another it is fatal even to know how to read. Let us await the first spark of reason; that is what brings out the character and also what gives it its genuine form; it is through reason also that we cultivate it, and before reason there is no genuine education for man.

As for Julie's maxims which you set against each other, I do not know what you find so contradictory in them: for my part, I find them perfectly consonant. Every man brings with him at birth a character, a genius, and talents that are peculiar to him. Those who are destined to live in country simplicity have no need to develop their faculties in order to be happy, and their buried talents are like the gold mines of the Valais which the public good does not permit to be worked.[54] But in the civil state[55] where one needs his hands less than his head, and where each individual is accountable to himself and to others for his whole worth, it is important to learn to extract from men everything that nature has given them, to steer them in the direction where they can go farthest, and above all to foster their inclinations with everything that can make them useful. In the first case only the species matters, each individual does what all the others do, example is the only rule, habit is the only talent, and each one makes use only of that part of his soul which is common to all. In the second, the individual is addressed: To the man as man you add whatever might make him superior to

another; you follow him as far as nature leads him, and you will make of him the greatest of men if he has what it takes to become that. These maxims are so far from contradictory that their application is the same for the early age. Do not at all instruct the villager's child, for it is not fitting that he be instructed; do not instruct the City dweller's child, for you do not know yet what instruction is right for him. In any event, let the body mature, until reason begins to bud: Then is the moment to cultivate it.

That all would seem to me very fine, said I, if I did not see in it a disadvantage which greatly countervenes the advantages you expect from this method; it is to allow children to acquire a thousand bad habits that can only be prevented by good ones. Look at those who are left to themselves; they soon contract all the shortcomings they see exemplified, because those examples are convenient to follow, and never imitate the good, which is harder to practice. Accustomed to obtaining everything, to working in every circumstance their indiscreet will, they become rebellious, headstrong, uncontrollable.... But, Monsieur de Wolmar interrupted, it seems to me that you have noticed the opposite in ours, which is exactly what gave rise to this discussion. This I concede, I said, and that is precisely what astonishes me. What has she done to make them docile? How did she go about it? What did she put in the place of the yoke of discipline? A much more inflexible yoke, he said immediately; that of necessity[56]: but by describing her conduct in detail, she will make you better understand her views. Then he invited her to explain her method to me, and after a short pause, here is more or less how she put it.

Happy are the well born,[57] my gentle friend! I do not presume as much from our endeavors as Monsieur de Wolmar does. Despite his maxims, I doubt one can ever get much good out of a bad character, and that every natural disposition can be made to turn out well: but being moreover convinced of the correctness of his method, I try to conform all my conduct to it in governing the family. My first expectation is that the issue of my womb cannot be evil; the second is to raise the children God has given me well enough, under the guidance of their father, so they may one day have the good fortune to be like him. For that I have tried to assimilate the rules he has prescribed for me, while lending them a less philosophical principle and one more suited to a mother's love; it is to see my children happy. That was my heart's first wish in bearing the sweet name of mother, and all life's cares are devoted to fulfilling it. The first time I held my elder son in my arms, it occurred to me that childhood makes up almost a quarter of the longest lives, that one rarely reaches the other three-quarters, and that it is a very cruel prudence to make that first portion unhappy in order to assure the happiness of the rest, which perhaps will never come.[58] It oc-

curred to me that during the frailty of their early years, nature subjects children in so many ways, that it is heartless to add to that subjection the tyranny of our whims, by depriving them of a freedom so limited, and one they can so little abuse.[59] I resolved to spare mine as much constraint as possible, to leave him the full use of his meager strength, and not to hinder in him any of nature's impulses. I have already gained thereby two great advantages; one is to preserve his nascent soul from lies, vanity, anger, envy, in a word all the vices born of slavery, and which one is obliged to foment in children, to obtain from them what one demands: the other to let his body grow strong freely through the continual exercise that instinct demands of him. Accustomed just like the peasants to running bareheaded in the sun, in the cold, to running out of breath, to working himself into a sweat, he toughens himself like them by exposure to the elements and grows more robust while living more contentedly. That is when one should turn one's thoughts toward adulthood and the accidents of humankind. I have already told you, I fear that deathly pusillanimity which, by dint of daintiness and care, enfeebles, effeminates a child, torments him with an endless constraint, chains him by a thousand vain precautions, finally exposes him for his whole life to the inevitable perils it would protect him from temporarily, and in order to spare him a few colds in his childhood, sets in store for him inflammations of the lungs, pleurisies, sunstrokes, and death when he is grown.

What gives children left to themselves most of the shortcomings you were mentioning is that, when not content with working their own will, they also impose it on others, and this, thanks to the foolish indulgence of mothers whom one humors only by gratifying all their child's whims. My friend, I flatter myself you have seen nothing in mine that smacked of domination and authoritarianism, even with the most menial domestic, nor have you seen me secretly applaud the false indulgence others show them. It is here I believe I am following a new and sure path to make a child at once free, patient, affectionate, docile, and this through a very simple means, which is to persuade him that he is but a child.[60]

To consider childhood in itself, is there a weaker, more miserable creature on earth, one more at the mercy of his whole surroundings, who has such need of pity, of love, of protection as a child? Does it not seem it is for this that the first sounds suggested to him by nature are cries and wailings, that she gave him an appearance so sweet and an air so touching, so all who approached him would take compassion on his frailty and rush to his assistance? What then is more shocking, more contrary to order, than to see an imperious and rebellious child, giving orders to everyone about him, impudently assuming the tone of a master with the very people who

have only to abandon him to condemn him death, and blind parents, approving of this audacity, bringing him up to be his nurse's tyrant, until the time he will be theirs.

For my part I have spared nothing to protect my son from the dangerous image of authority and servitude, and never give him cause to think he is served more out of duty than pity. This point is, perhaps, the most difficult and most important one in the whole education, and it would take forever to describe in detail all the precautions I had to take to prevent him from acquiring that instinct so quick to distinguish between the mercenary services of domestics, and the tenderness of a mother's ministrations.

One of the principal means I have employed has been, as I have told you, to convince him thoroughly of the powerlessness of his age to live without our help. After which I had no trouble convincing him that all the forms of assistance we are obliged to receive from others are acts of dependency, that domestics have a genuine superiority over him, in that he can in no way do without them, whereas there is nothing he can do for them; so that, far from deriving vanity from their services, he receives them with a sort of humiliation, as testimony to his frailty, and he ardently aspires to the time when he will be big and strong enough to have the honor of serving himself.

These notions, said I, would be difficult to establish in houses where the father and mother have themselves waited upon like children. But in this one where each individual, beginning with yourself, has his functions to fulfill, and where the relationship between servants and masters is but a perpetual exchange of services and attentions, I do not believe such establishment impossible. Yet it remains for me to conceive how children accustomed to seeing their needs anticipated do not extend this right to their whims, or how they fail to suffer occasionally from the ill humor of a domestic who treats as whim a genuine need?

My friend, Madame de Wolmar resumed, an unenlightened mother makes monsters of everything. True needs are quite limited in children as in men, and we must be more concerned with well-being that lasts than with that of a single moment. Do you think a child who is under no restraint can suffer enough from the ill-humor of a governess under a mother's eye to be inconvenienced by it? You are positing drawbacks that arise from vices previously contracted, but it hasn't occurred to you that all my attentions have gone to preventing these vices from arising. Naturally women love children. Clashes between them ensue only when the one wishes to subject the other to his or her whims. Now this cannot happen here, neither with respect to the child, of whom we require nothing, nor with respect to the governess to whom the child has no orders to give. I have in

this done the exact opposite of other mothers, who pretend to want the child to obey the domestic, and in effect want the domestic to obey the child. Here no one commands or obeys. But the child never obtains from those who approach him any more goodwill than he has for them. Therefore, sensing that he holds over everyone around him no authority but that of benevolence, he becomes docile and accommodating; by trying to win the hearts of others his own is won in turn; for one loves by making oneself loved; this is the infallible effect of †self-interest, and, from this reciprocal affection, born of equality, effortlessly result the good qualities we endlessly preach to our children, without ever obtaining any of them.

It seemed to me that the most essential part of a child's education, that which is never treated in the most carefully conceived educations, is to make him clearly appreciate his misery, his frailty, his dependency, and, as my husband told you, the heavy yoke of necessity which nature imposes on man; and this, not only so he will be aware of what we do to lighten his yoke, but above all so he will learn early in what rank providence has placed him, so he will not raise himself beyond his reach, and so nothing human will seem foreign to him.[61]

Induced from their birth by the indolence in which they are nurtured, by the deference everyone shows them, by the ease of obtaining everything they desire, into thinking everyone must yield to their whims, young people enter the world with this impertinent prejudice, and often they get over it only by dint of humiliations, confrontations, and disappointments; now I would like to save my son this second and mortifying education by giving him in the first one a more accurate opinion of things. I had first resolved to grant him whatever he might ask for, persuaded that nature's first impulses are always good and salutary. But it did not take long for me to learn that by assuming the right to be obeyed children departed from the state of nature almost upon birth, and contracted our vices by our example, their own by our indiscretion. I saw that if I meant to satisfy all his whims, they would grow with my indulgence, that there would always be a point where I would have to halt, and where the refusal would be all the more painful to him for his being less used to it. Not therefore being able, while awaiting reason, to spare him every distress, I preferred the lesser and the one more quickly over with. So that he would find a refusal less cruel I first accustomed him to refusal; and to spare him long disappointments, lamentations, rebellions, I made every refusal irrevocable. It is true that I refuse as seldom as I can, and that I look twice before I come to that. Whatever we grant him is granted without condition the moment it is asked for, and we are very lenient on this score: but he never obtains anything by carrying on; tears and cajolery are equally useless. He is so con-

vinced of this that he has ceased using them; from the first word he accepts what he is told, and is no more upset at seeing us put away a cornet of candies he would like to eat than at seeing a bird he would like to hold fly away; for he feels the same impossibility of having the one or the other. In what we take away from him he sees nothing but what he could not keep, nor does he see anything in what we refuse him but what he could not obtain, and far from beating on the table against which he hurts himself, he would not beat the person who resists him. In whatever distresses him he feels the empire of necessity, the effect of his own frailty, never the working of someone else's malevolence.... One moment! she said rather sharply, seeing I was going to reply; I anticipate your objection; I'll get to that presently.

The thing that encourages children's whimperings is the attention paid to them, either in giving in to them, or in fighting them. Sometimes all they need in order to cry all day long is to notice that we don't want them to cry. Whether we cajole or threaten them, the measures we take to make them quit are all pernicious and almost always without effect. As long as we take notice of their tears, that is reason enough for them to carry on; but they get over it soon enough when they see that we pay them no more mind; for big and small, no one likes to take unnecessary pains. That is precisely what happened with my elder son. At first he was a little bawler who drove everyone to distraction, and you are witness that now he is no more to be heard in the house than if there were not a single child. He cries when he suffers; that is the voice of nature which must never be constrained; but he hushes the minute he no longer suffers. And so I pay great attention to his tears, quite sure that he never sheds them needlessly. I gain thereby in knowing precisely when he feels pain and when he does not, when he is well and when he is ill; an advantage one loses with those who cry capriciously, and solely in order to be pacified. By the way, I admit that this point is not easily obtained from Nurses and governesses: for since nothing is more annoying than always to hear a child complain, and as these simple souls never see beyond the present moment, it does not occur to them that for being silenced today the child will cry more tomorrow. The worst is that the obstinacy he contracts is consequential in his later years. The same cause that makes him a bawler at three makes him rebellious at twelve, quarrelsome at twenty, imperious at thirty, and unbearable his whole life long.

Now back to you, she said with a smile. In whatever we grant to children, they easily see the desire to humor them; in whatever we require of them or deny them, they must assume there are reasons without asking what they are. That is another advantage to acting authoritatively with

them rather than using persuasion when the need arises: for since it isn't possible for them not sometimes to perceive the reason we have for acting as we do, it is natural for them to assume it also exists when they are not in a position to see it. On the contrary, once one has submitted something to their judgment, they presume to sit in judgment on everything, they become sophistic, subtle, devious, resourceful quibblers, ever seeking to reduce to silence those who have the weakness to expose themselves to their feeble lights. When one is obliged to justify things to them which they are in no position to comprehend, they ascribe the most prudent conduct to whim the minute it is beyond their ken. In a word, the only means of rendering them amenable to reason is not to reason with them, but to convince them thoroughly that reason is beyond their age: for then they assume it to be on the side where it should be, unless they are given ample cause for thinking otherwise. They know well that we do not wish to torment them when they are sure we love them, and children are rarely wrong about that. Therefore when I deny mine anything, I do not argue with them, I do not tell them why I am against it, but I act in such a way that they see it, insofar as is possible, and sometimes after the fact. In this manner they become accustomed to understanding that I never deny them anything without a good reason for it, although they do not always perceive it.

Faithful to the same principle, neither will I suffer my children to take part in the conversation of reasonable people, and foolishly imagine they can hold their own in it like the others when their indiscreet babble is tolerated. I mean for them to answer modestly and in few words when they are asked a question without ever speaking on their own, and especially without ever presuming to interfere by impertinently questioning people older than themselves, to whom they owe respect.

In truth, Julie, said I interrupting, this is most rigorous for such a tender mother! Pythagoras was not more severe with his disciples than you are with yours.[62] Not only do you not treat them as men, but one would say you fear they will too soon cease to be children. What surer and more agreeable means can they have to gain instruction than to query the people more enlightened than they on the things they don't know? What would the Ladies of Paris think of your maxims, who find that their children never chatter soon enough nor long enough, and gauge the wit they will have as adults from the silliness they spout while they are young? Wolmar will tell me that this might be all right in a country where the primary merit is to chatter well, and where one is dispensed from thinking provided one speaks well. But you who wish to provide such a happy future for your children, how will you reconcile such happiness with such con-

straint, and what becomes, amidst all these restrictions, of the freedom you pretend to leave them?

How then? She instantly replied: is it restricting their freedom to prevent them from infringing on ours, and are they unable to be happy unless a whole assembly silently admires their infantile drivel? Let us prevent their vanity from springing up, or at least halt its progress; that is truly to serve their felicity: for man's vanity is the source of his greatest pains, and there is no one so perfect and so acclaimed that it does not still bring him more grief than pleasure.*

What can a child think of himself, when he sees around him a whole circle of rational people listening to him, leading him on, admiring him, awaiting with fawning avidness the oracles issuing from his mouth, and breaking forth in resounding joy at every impertinence he utters? It would be hard indeed for a man to prevent such false applause going to his head; just think what effect it will have on the child! Children's prattle is like the predictions of Almanacs. It would be a wonder if out of so many vain words chance did not occasionally turn up a fortunate happenstance. Imagine then what exclamations of flattery do to a poor mother already too deluded by her own heart, and to a child who has no idea what he is saying and sees himself acclaimed! Do not think that detecting the mistake makes me immune to it. No, I see the fallacy, and fall into it. But if I admire my son's rejoinders, at least I do it secretly; he does not learn by seeing me applaud them to become prattling and vain, and the flatterers by having me repeat them do not have the pleasure of laughing at my bias.

One day when we had visitors, having gone to give some instructions, I saw when I returned four or five big boobies busy playing with him, and set to relate bombastically to me umpteen sweet nothings they had just heard, and with which they seemed filled with wonderment. Messieurs, I said to them rather coldly, I do not doubt that you know how to make marionettes utter very fine things: but I hope one day my children will be men, that they will act and speak by themselves, and then I shall always learn with a heart full of joy of all the good things they have said and done. Ever since people saw that this means of winning favor did not work, people have played with my children as with children, not as with Punchinello; there is no one to act the foil for them any more,[63] and they are noticeably improved now that they are no longer admired.

As for questions, they are not categorically forbidden. I am the first to tell them to ask their father or me quietly and privately whatever they want to know. But I do not suffer them to cut into a serious discussion to make

* If ever vanity made a man happy on earth, to be sure that happy man was nothing but a fool.

everyone pay attention to the first impertinence that crosses their mind. The art of asking questions is not as easy as people think. It is much more the master's art than the disciples'; one has already to have learned many things before knowing how to ask about what one doesn't know. The scholar knows and inquires, says an Indian proverb; but the ignorant man knows not even what to inquire about.*[64] For want of this prerequisite knowledge unsupervised children almost never ask anything but inept questions that serve no purpose, or deep and scabrous ones whose resolution is beyond them, and since they are not entitled to know everything, it is important that they not have the right to ask everything. That is why, generally speaking, they learn more from the questions we put to them than from the ones they themselves ask.

Even if this method profited them as much as people think, is not the science that befits them first and foremost that of being discreet and modest, and is there any other they ought to learn at the expense of that one? What then do this emancipation of speech before the age for speaking, and this right of boldly subjecting men to their interrogation, produce in children? Little prattling questioners, who question less to learn than to dun, to make everyone pay attention to them, and who acquire even more taste for this prattle from the embarrassment into which they see one is sometimes put by their indiscreet questions, and so everyone is uneasy the minute they open their mouth. That is not so much the way to instruct them as to make them muddleheaded and vain, a drawback greater in my opinion than the advantage they gain thereby; for ignorance little by little decreases, but vanity never does anything but increase.

The worst that could result from this reserve if too much prolonged would be that at the age of reason my son's conversation might be less flighty, his words less vigorous and less abundant, and considering to what extent this habit of spending one's life saying nothings narrows the mind, I would regard this happy sterility rather as a good than an evil. Idle people perpetually bored with themselves attempt to place a high value on the art of entertaining them, and one would say good manners consist in uttering nothing but empty words, as in offering only gifts that are useless: but human society has a nobler objective and its true pleasures are more solid. The organ of truth, man's worthiest organ, the only one whose use distinguishes him from animals,[65] has not been given him to make no better use of than they do of their cries. He sinks lower than them when he talks in order to say nothing, and man must be man even in his diversions. If there is politeness in stunning everyone with vapid chatter, to me there is a far more genuine politeness in letting others speak preferentially, in

* This proverb is taken from Chardin. Tome 5, p. 70, in-12.

making more of what they say than what we would ourselves say, and showing we think too well of them to believe we can entertain them with our nonsense. Good breeding, which most causes us to be sought out and cherished, is not so much to scintillate as to make others scintillate, and by dint of modesty to give their pride freer rein. Let us not fear that a man of wit who abstains from speaking only out of restraint and discretion can ever pass for a fool. In whatever country, it is not possible for a man to be judged by what he has not said, and disdained for keeping his peace. On the contrary we generally observe that silent people make an impression, that we mind our words in their presence, and lend them great attention when they speak; the which, leaving them to choose their moments and making us miss nothing of what they say, puts all the advantages on their side. It is so difficult for the wisest man to maintain all his presence of mind in a long flow of words, it is so rare for him to avoid letting things escape that he will long regret, that he would rather hold back something good than risk something bad. In sum, when it is not for want of wit that he keeps silent, if he does not speak, however discreet he be, the blame falls on those in his company.

But it is a long way from age six to twenty; my son will not forever be a child, and in proportion as his reason begins to emerge,[66] his father's intention is indeed to let it operate. As for me, my mission does not extend that far. I nurture children and do not presume to fashion men. I hope, she said, looking at her husband, that worthier hands will take on this noble task. I am a woman and a mother, I know how to keep my place. Once again, the role I am entrusted with is not to educate my sons, but to prepare them to be educated.

Even in that I am doing no more than following Monsieur de Wolmar's system point by point, and the further I go, the more persuaded I am of how excellent and just it is, and how well it accords with mine. Consider my children and especially the elder; do you know any on earth who are happier, gayer, less troublesome? You see them leap, laugh, run about all day without ever bothering anyone. What pleasures, what independence are accessible to their age that they do not enjoy or that they abuse? They restrain themselves as little in front of me as in my absence. On the contrary, under their mother's eye they always have a bit more confidence, and although I am the instigator of all the strictness they experience, they always find me the least strict: for I could not bear not to be what they love most in the world.

The only laws we impose on them in our company are those of freedom itself, that is to say, that they not bother the company more than it bothers them, that they not shout louder than one speaks, and as we do not oblige

them to concern themselves with us, neither do I wish them to pretend we concern ourselves with them. When they trespass such just laws, their whole punishment is to be sent away at once, and my whole strategy for making it one is to see to it that they enjoy being nowhere as much as here. With that exception, they are subjected to nothing; we never force them to learn a thing; we never annoy them with useless corrections; we never reprimand them; the only lessons they receive are practical lessons taken in the simplicity of nature.[67] Everyone well instructed about all this conforms to my intentions with a complicity and a diligence that leave me nothing to desire, and if some error is to be feared, my constant care easily prevents or corrects it.

Yesterday, for example, the elder having snatched a drum from the younger, had made him cry. Fanchon said nothing, but an hour later, at the moment when the drum's thief was most engrossed in it, she took it back; he followed her around, demanding it back, and crying in his turn. She said to him: you have taken it by force from your brother; I am taking it from you in the same way; how can you complain? Am I not the stronger? Then she began to beat the drum in imitation of him, as if it gave her great pleasure. Up to that point everything was fine. But some time later she was going to give the drum back to the younger, at that point I stopped her; for that was no longer nature's lesson, and from it could arise a first seed of jealousy between the two brothers. By losing the drum the younger bore the harsh law of necessity, the elder felt his injustice, both were made aware of their weakness and got over it a minute later.

A program so novel and so contrary to prevailing opinions had at first made me apprehensive. In the course of explaining it to me they finally made me an admirer, and I sensed that for guiding man, the process of nature is always the best. The sole drawback I found in this method, and this drawback seemed to me very great, was that it neglected the only faculty that children possess in all its vigor and one that only weakens with advancing in age. It seemed to me that in terms of their own system, the weaker, the more insufficient operations of the understanding, the more one should exercise and enhance the memory, so able then to sustain the task. It is memory, I said, that must compensate for reason until reason emerges, and enrich it once it has emerged. A mind given nothing to do becomes heavy and sluggish through inaction. Seed does not sprout in an ill-prepared field, and to start out by being stupid is a strange preparation for learning to be reasonable. How is that, stupid! Madame de Wolmar instantly cried out. Would you confuse two qualities as different and almost as contradictory as memory and judgment?* As if the quantity of ill-

* This does not seem to me well observed. Nothing is so necessary to judgment as memory: not, it is true, memory for words.

digested and unconnected things with which one fills a head still frail did not do reason more harm than good! I admit that of all man's faculties, memory is the first to develop and the easiest to cultivate in children: but which in your opinion is to be preferred, what is easiest for them to learn, or what they most need to know?

Consider the use that is made of this facility of theirs, the violence that must be done them, the endless constraint to which they must be subjected in order to put their memory on display, and compare the usefulness they derive from it to the pain they are made to suffer for that. What! Force a child to study languages he will never speak, before he has even learned his own[68]; make him constantly rehearse and parse verses he does not understand, the whole harmony of which for him is only in his fingers[69]; muddle his mind with circles and spheres of which he has not the faintest notion; overwhelm him with a thousand names of cities and rivers he constantly mixes up and learns anew each day; is this cultivating his memory for the good of his judgment, and is this whole frivolous learning worth a single one of the tears it costs him?[70]

If all this were merely useless, I would have less objection to it; but is it nothing to teach a child to content himself with words, and think he knows what he cannot understand? Could it be that such an agglomeration does not prejudice the first ideas a human head should be furnished with, and would it not be better to have no memory at all than to fill it with all this clutter at the expense of the necessary knowledge whose place it takes up?

No, if nature has given the brain of children that malleability that makes it apt for receiving all sorts of impressions, it is not so we may engrave in it the names of Kings, dates, terms like heraldry, sphere, geography, and all those words without any meaning for their age or any utility at all for any age, with which we overwhelm their sad and sterile childhood; but so all the ideas relative to the state of man, all those that pertain to his happiness and enlighten him about his duties might be inscribed in it early in indelible characters, and help him conduct himself during his life in a manner appropriate to his being and his faculties.

Not studying in books does not mean that a child's memory remains idle: everything he sees, everything he hears strikes him, and he remembers it; he registers men's actions and words within himself, and everything around him is the book in which without effort he continually enriches his memory, while awaiting the time when his judgment can reap the benefit of it. It is in the choice of these objects, in the care taken to present to him constantly those he must know and conceal from him those he must not, that the genuine art of cultivating the first of his faculties consists, and thereby one should try to create for him a storehouse of knowl-

edge that will serve his education during his youth, and his conduct at all times. This method, it is true, does not create young prodigies, and does not allow governesses and preceptors to show off; but it creates judicious, robust men, healthy in body and understanding, who, without having attracted admiration during their youth, attract esteem when they are grown.[71]

Do not think, nonetheless, Julie continued, that we entirely neglect here those concerns you make so much of. A reasonably vigilant mother holds her children's passions in her hands. There are means of stimulating and fostering in them the desire to learn or do such and such a thing; and insofar as these means can be reconciled with the most entire freedom of the child and engender in him no seed of vice, I make rather liberal use of them, without insisting if they do not meet with success; for there will always be time for him to learn, but there is not a moment to lose for shaping a good natural disposition in him; and Monsieur de Wolmar has such a respect for the early development of reason that he maintains that, were his son to know nothing at age twelve, he would be no less educated at fifteen; not to mention that nothing is less necessary than being learned, and nothing more so than to be good and to conduct oneself properly.

You know that our elder son is already a passable reader. Here is how he acquired the taste for reading. My intention was to recite to him from time to time for his amusement some fable of La Fontaine, and I had already begun, when he asked me whether crows could talk? I immediately spied the difficulty of bringing him to sense clearly the distance from apologue to lie, I got out of it as best I could, and convinced that fables are made for men, but that we must always tell the naked truth to children, I suppressed La Fontaine.[72] In its place I put a collection of interesting and edifying little stories, most of them drawn from the Bible; then seeing that the child developed a taste for my tales, I got the idea of making them even more useful to him, by trying to write some myself as entertaining as I could make them, and always adapting them to the moment's need. I wrote them as I went, in a pretty book graced with pictures, which I kept carefully put away, and from which I read him from time to time a few tales, rarely, not for long, and often repeating the same ones with commentary, before going on to new ones. An idle child is subject to boredom; the little tales served as remedy; but when I saw he was the most avidly attentive, I would sometimes remember some instructions I needed to give, and absent myself at the most interesting point leaving the book nonchalantly behind. At once he would go beg his governess or Fanchon or someone to read the rest: but since he has no right to give anyone orders and everyone was informed, they did not always obey. The one would refuse, another

would have something else to do, yet another would mumble slowly and badly, and still another following my example would abandon a tale halfway through. When we saw he was plenty bored by such a degree of dependency, someone suggested secretly to him that he learn to read, to be rid of it and browse through the book at his leisure. This proposal appealed to him. We had to find servants obliging enough to be willing to give him lessons: a new difficulty we pressed only as far as we had to. Despite all these precautions, he lost patience three or four times; we let him be. Except that I endeavored to make the tales even more entertaining, and he renewed his efforts with such fervor that although it has not been six months since he began to learn in earnest, he will soon be up to reading the whole collection by himself.[73]

That is more or less the way I shall attempt to motivate his zeal and good will for learning subjects that require consistency and application, and are appropriate to his age; but whatever he learns by reading, it is not from books he will draw this learning; for it is not to be found there, and reading is in no way appropriate for children. I also wish to accustom him early to filling his head with ideas and not with words; that is why I never make him learn anything by heart.[74]

Never? I interrupted: That is saying a lot; for surely he must all the same know his catechism and his prayers. There you are mistaken, she replied. With respect to prayer, every morning and every evening I say mine aloud in my children's room, and that is enough for them to learn it without our obliging them to; as for the catechism, they have no idea what it is. What, Julie! your children are not learning their catechism? No, my friend; my children are not learning their catechism. What! I said, quite taken aback, so pious a mother!.... I do not understand you. And why are your children not learning their catechism? So that some day they will believe it, she said, I mean to make Christians of them one day. Ah, I see now! I cried out; you don't want their faith to consist merely in words, nor for them only to have learned their Religion, but also to believe in it, and you rightly think it is impossible for man to believe what he does not understand.[75] You are asking a lot, Monsieur de Wolmar said to me with a smile; might you be a Christian by chance? I endeavor to be one, I said to him firmly. I believe of Religion all I can understand, and respect the rest of it without rejecting it. Julie made me a sign of approval, and we resumed the topic of our discussion.[76]

After going into other details that gave me to understand how active, indefatigable, and farsighted is a mother's zeal, she concluded by observing that her method corresponded exactly to the two objectives she had had in mind, that is, letting the children's natural disposition develop, and

studying it. Mine are in no way limited, she said, and are incapable of misusing their freedom; their character is susceptible of neither corruption nor constraint; we leave in peace their body to build strength and their judgment to germinate; their soul is not defiled by slavery, the admiration of others does not foment their †vanity, they think of themselves not as powerful men nor as chained-up animals, but as happy and free children. To protect them from vices that are not in them, they have, it seems to me, a prophylactic more powerful than speeches they would not understand, or of which they would soon tire. It is the example of the morals of all those about them; the discussions they hear, which here come naturally to everyone and do not have to be staged expressly for them; the peace and fellowship they observe; the harmony they see continually reigning both in the respective conduct of all, and in the conduct and speech of each individual.

Still being nursed in their original simplicity, where would they get vices of which they have never seen an example, passions they have had no opportunity to experience, prejudices nothing inspires in them? You can see that no error is overtaking them, no bad proclivity manifests itself in them. Their ignorance is not stubborn, their desires are not adamant; inclinations to evil are prevented, nature is justified, and everything proves to me that the failings we blame on her are not her doing but ours.

So it is that left to their heart's penchant, nothing disguising nor corrupting it, our children are not given an external and artificial form, but preserve precisely that of their original character: so it is that this character develops daily before our eyes without restriction, and we can study the impulses of nature in their most secret principles. Sure they will never be admonished or punished, they know not how to lie, nor to hide, and in everything they say either between themselves or to us, they allow to be seen without constraint whatever they have in the depths of their souls. Free to babble between themselves all day long, it never occurs to them to feel embarrassment for a minute in front of me. I never correct them, nor tell them to be quiet, nor pretend to listen to them, and if they said the most reprehensible things on earth I would not betray any awareness of it: but in fact, I listen to them with the greatest attention without their suspecting it; I keep an exact register of what they do and what they say; these are the natural productions of the field we must cultivate. A vicious phrase in their mouth is a foreign plant whose seed the wind brought in; if I cut it off with a reprimand, it will soon sprout again: instead I quietly look for its root, and take care to pull it. I am, she said to me with a laugh, merely the Gardener's servant; I weed the garden, I remove the bad seed, it is for him to cultivate the good.

Let us also agree that with all the pains I could have taken, I had to be well seconded to hope to succeed, and the success of my ministrations depended upon a combination of circumstances that has perhaps never been seen anywhere but here. It required the understanding of an enlightened father to sort out amidst established prejudices the genuine art of governing children from their birth; it required all his patience to lend himself to its execution, without ever giving the lie to his lessons by his conduct; it required children well born in whom nature had done enough so that we could love its handiwork alone; it required having around us only intelligent and well-intentioned domestics, who never tire of entering into their masters' views; a single brutal or flattering servant would have been enough to spoil everything. In truth, when one considers how many foreign causes can set back the best designs and overturn the best-laid schemes, one has to thank fortune for all the good things one does in life, and say that proper behavior depends a great deal on happiness.

Say rather, I blurted out, that happiness depends even more on proper behavior! Do you not see that this concurrence that so pleases you is your doing, and that everyone who comes near to you is forced to be like you? Mothers! When you complain you are not seconded, how ill you know your own power! be all you should be, you will surmount all obstacles; you will force everyone to fulfill his duties if you fulfill all of yours well. Are your rights not nature's? Despite the maxims of vice, they will forever be dear to the human heart. Ah do but be women and mothers, and earth's sweetest empire will also be the most respected!

As she concluded this conversation, Julie remarked that everything took on a new facility since Henriette's arrival. It is certain, she said, that I would need much less care and skill, if I wished to introduce emulation between the two brothers; but this means appears to me too dangerous; I prefer to have more work to do and risk nothing. Henriette takes its place; since she is of a different sex, their elder, since they both love her to pieces, and since she has sense beyond her years, I make her their first governess in a way, and with all the more success that her lessons are less suspect to them.

As for her, her education is my business; but its principles are so different that they deserve a separate discussion.[77] At least I can say in advance that in her it will be difficult to add to nature's gifts, and that she will be as worthy as her mother, if anyone on earth can be.

Milord, we await you from one day to the next, and this should be my last Letter. But I understand what is prolonging your stay with the army, and it makes me shudder. Julie is not less anxious about it; she begs you to give us news of you more often, and implores you to consider as you expose your person, how reckless you are with your friends' peace of mind.

For my part, it is not for me to tell you anything. Do your duty; timid advice can no more issue from my heart than enter yours. Dear Bomston, I know too well; the only death worthy of your life would be to shed your blood for the glory of your country; but do you owe no account of your days to him who preserved his own only for your sake?

LETTER IV

From Milord Edward

I see from your last two letters that I am missing one written earlier, apparently the first that you wrote to me with the army, and in which you explained Madame de Wolmar's secret sorrows. I have not received this Letter, and I conjecture that it may have been in the chest of a Mail-coach that was captured. Repeat to me therefore, my friend, what it contained; reason avails me nothing and my heart is troubled: for once again, if the soul of Julie knows not happiness and peace, where on this earth can their refuge be?

As for the risks she thinks me exposed to, set her mind at ease; we are up against an enemy too clever to let us incur any. With a handful of men, he neutralizes all our forces, and everywhere takes away our means of attacking him.[78] However, since we are confident, we could well lift difficulties insurmountable for better Generals and finally force the French to defeat us. I predict that we will pay dearly for our early successes, and that the battle won at Dettingen[79] will make us lose one in Flanders. We have a great Captain against us; that is not all: he has his troops' confidence, and the French soldier who trusts his General is invincible. Contrariwise, he is such an easy prey when he is commanded by Courtiers he despises, and this occurs so often, that we have only to await Court intrigues and the opportunity, to be very sure to defeat the most valiant nation on the continent. They know this quite well themselves. Milord Marlborough upon seeing the good countenance and warlike mien of a soldier captured at Blenheim,*[80] said to him: If there had been fifty thousand men like you in the French army, it would not have let itself be defeated like this. Oh, damn! replied the grenadier, we had enough men like me; what we were lacking was only one like you. Well, a man like him presently commands the French army and is lacking in ours; but we have hardly given that a thought.

However that may be, I want to see the maneuvers of the rest of this

* This is the name the English give to the battle of Hochstet.

campaign, and I have resolved to remain in the army until it is quartered.[81] We will all gain by this delay. The season being too far along for crossing the mountains, we will spend the winter where you are, and will proceed to Italy only at the beginning of Spring. Tell Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar that I am making this new arrangement so as to enjoy at leisure the spectacle you describe to me so well, and to see Madame d'Orbe established with them. Continue, my good man, to write to me with the same attention, and you will give me more pleasure than ever: my baggage has been captured, and I have no books; but I read your letters.

LETTER V

To Milord Edward

What joy you bring me by declaring that we will spend the winter at Clarens! But how dearly you make me pay for it by prolonging your stay with the army! What I especially do not like is to see clearly that before our separation the decision to join the campaign had already been made, and that you did not want to say anything to me about it. Milord, I sense the reason for this secrecy and cannot thank you for it. Could it be that you scorn me enough to think it would be good for me to survive you, or have you known me to possess such unworthy attachments as to prefer them to the honor of dying with my friend? If I did not deserve to follow you, you should have left me in London, you would have offended me less than by sending me here.

It is clear from your last letter that one of mine indeed has been lost, and this loss must have rendered the next two in many ways quite obscure; but the explanations needed to understand them properly will come in their time. What is most urgent now is to relieve you of your present anxiety over Madame de Wolmar's secret sorrow.

I shall not repeat to you the sequel to the conversation I had with her after her husband's departure. So many things have happened since to make me forget part of it, and we took it up again so many times during his absence that I am limiting myself to the essentials so as to avoid repetitions.

So: she told me that this very Husband who did everything to make her happy was the single cause of all her pain, and that the more sincere their mutual attachment grew, the more it caused her to suffer. Would you have thought it, Milord? That man so wise, so reasonable, so removed from every kind of vice, so little subject to human passions, does not believe any of what gives a value to virtues, and, amid the innocence of an irreproachable life, carries deep in his heart the horrible peace of the wicked. The re-

flection arising from this contrast adds to Julie's suffering, and it seems that she would more easily forgive him for refusing to acknowledge the Author of his being if he had more cause for fearing him or more arrogance for defying him. That a guilty man should assuage his conscience at the expense of his reason, that the honor of thinking differently from the common man should inspire him who dogmatizes, this error at least one can fathom; but, she pursued with a sigh, why should a man who is so honorable and takes so little vanity in his knowledge, bother to be an unbeliever!

You have to be acquainted with the two spouses' character, you have to imagine them wholly centered on their family, and being the whole world to each other; you have to know the union that prevails between them in every other matter, to imagine how greatly their disagreement on this single point is capable of troubling its charms. Monsieur de Wolmar, raised in the Greek rite, was not one to tolerate the absurdity of such a ridiculous creed. His reason, too superior to the stupid yoke they wanted to impose on him, soon shook it off disdainfully; and rejecting all at once everything he had learned from an authority so suspect, forced into impiety, he became an atheist.

Having subsequently always lived in Catholic countries he did not learn to form a better opinion of the Christian faith from the one professed there. He saw in it no other religion than the self-interest of its ministers. He saw that everything in it consisted in senseless grimaces, somewhat more subtly plastered over with words that had no meaning, he noted that all *honest people* were unanimously of his opinion and scarcely disguised it, that the clergy itself, a bit more discreetly, made fun in secret of what it taught in public, and he has repeatedly declared to me that after much time and inquiry, he had in his whole life found no more than three Priests who believed in God.*[82] Attempting to enlighten himself in good faith[83] on these matters, he had plunged into the dark recesses of metaphysics where man has no other guide than the systems he carries in with him, and seeing everywhere nothing but doubts and contradictions; once he finally arrived among Christians[84] he arrived too late, his faith had already closed itself to truth, his reason was no longer accessible to certitude; whatever was proven to him served rather to destroy one sentiment than to establish an-

* God forbid I should approve these harsh and outrageous assertions; I merely affirm that there are people who make them and whose excess is only too often justified by the clergy of all countries and all sects. But my design in this note being scarcely to take cover in a cowardly manner, here in all clarity is my sentiment on this point. It is that no true believer can possibly practice intolerance or persecution. If I were a judge, and the law prescribed the death penalty against atheists, I would begin by having burned for atheism anyone who came to turn in someone else.

other, he ended up combatting all kinds of dogmas equally, and ceased being an atheist only to become a skeptic.[85]

This is the husband Heaven destined for the Julie whose so simple faith and so gentle piety you are acquainted with: but one has to have lived with her as familiarly as her cousin and I have, to know how much that tender soul is naturally inclined toward devoutness. One would say that nothing earthly being able to satisfy the need to love that consumes her, that excess of sensibility is forced to return to its source. Hers is not, as with Saint Theresa, a heart in love that deceives itself and wants to choose the wrong object[86]; hers is a heart that truly has never done enough, that neither love nor friendship has been capable of exhausting, and that addresses its overabundant affections to the sole Being worthy of absorbing them.*[87] The love of God does not detach her from creatures; it gives her neither harshness nor bitterness. All these attachments produced by the same cause, mutually stimulated become thereby more charming and sweet, and for my part I believe she would be less devout if she less tenderly loved her father, her husband, her children, her cousin, and myself.

What is singular is that the more devout she becomes, the less she thinks she is, and that she complains of feeling in herself an arid soul that does not know how to love God. However one tries, she often says, the heart attaches itself only by the mediation of the senses or the imagination that represents them, and how can one see or imagine the immensity of the great Being!** When I wish to raise myself toward him, I know not where I am; seeing no proportion between him and me, I know not how to proceed to reach him, I no longer see or feel anything, I find myself in a sort of nothingness, and if I dared judge of others by myself, I would fear that the ecstasies of mystics are less the product of a full heart than an empty brain.

How then, she continues, shall I go about escaping the phantoms of a reason which is going awry? I substitute a creed that is simplistic but within my grasp for those sublime contemplations that surpass my faculties. To my sorrow I lower divine majesty; between it and me I interpose sensory objects; unable to contemplate it in its essence, I contemplate it at least in

* How is this! God will have only what his creatures leave over? On the contrary, the portion creatures can occupy in the human heart is so small, that when we think we have filled it with them, it is still empty. It takes an infinite object to fill it.

** It is certain that one must rack the soul to raise it to the sublime ideas of divinity; a more sensory faith gives rest to the spirit of the multitude. They like to be offered devotional articles that dispense them from thinking about God. Upon these maxims have the Catholics acted wrongly in filling their Legends, their Calendars, their Churches, with little Angels, strapping young men, pretty woman saints? Baby Jesus in the arms of his charming and modest mother, is at the same time one of the most touching and most agreeable sights that Christian devotion can offer to the eyes of the faithful.

its works, I love it in its blessings; but whatever approach I use, instead of the pure love it requires, I have only a self-interested gratitude to offer it.

So it is that everything turns to sentiment in a sensible heart. Julie finds in all creation nothing but causes for compassion and gratitude. Everywhere she perceives the beneficent hand of providence; her children are the dear charge she has received from it; she gathers its gifts in the products of the earth; she sees her table covered by its cares; she goes to sleep under its protection; it awakens her peacefully; she intuits its lessons in adversity, and its favors in pleasures; the good things enjoyed by all those she cherishes are so many new causes for praise; while the God of creation escapes her feeble eyes, she sees everywhere the common father of mankind. Is not honoring thus his supreme blessings to serve the infinite Being as much as one can?

Think, Milord, what a torment it is to share a withdrawn existence with someone who cannot share the hope that endears it to us! Not to be able to bless God's works with him, nor speak of the happy future his goodness promises us! To see him, even as he does good, insensible to everything that makes doing good agreeable, and by the oddest inconsistency thinking like a heathen and living like a Christian! Imagine Julie out walking with her husband; she admiring, in the rich and brilliant adornment which the earth displays, the work and gifts of the Author of creation; he seeing nothing in all this but a fortuitous combination in which nothing is linked to anything else except by a blind force. Imagine a sincerely united couple, not daring lest they annoy each other to yield, he to the reflections, she to the sentiments, that the surrounding objects inspire in them, and inferring from their very attachment the duty of constantly controlling themselves. Julie and I almost never go walking without some striking and picturesque sight recalling to her these painful thoughts. Alas! she says sorrowfully; the wonders of nature, so alive, so animate for us,[88] are dead in the eyes of the unfortunate Wolmar, and in this great harmony of beings, where everything speaks of God in so sweet a voice, he perceives nothing but an eternal silence.[89]

You who understand Julie, you who know how this expansive soul likes to share everything, think what she would suffer from this mutual reticence, even were its only drawback such a sad division between two people who ought to hold everything in common. But despite her, more baneful thoughts arise in the wake of these. In vain does she wish to reject these involuntary terrors, they return to trouble her at every instant. What horror for such a tender wife to imagine the supreme Being avenging his unacknowledged divinity, to remember that the happiness of the man who provides hers must end with his life,[90] and to see in the father of her chil-

dren a mere reprobate! At this awful image, all her meekness barely saves her from despair, and Religion, which makes her husband's unbelief bitter to her, alone gives her the strength to bear it. If Heaven, she often says, denies me this honorable man's conversion, I have only one favor to ask of it; it is that I be the first to die.

Such, Milord, is the too just cause of her secret sorrows; such is the inner pain that seems to burden her conscience with another's hardening, and becomes all the more cruel to her by the care she takes to conceal it. The atheism that walks barefaced among the papists is obliged to hide in any country where, reason making it possible to believe in God, unbelievers lose their only excuse.[91] This System[92] is naturally dismaying; while it finds partisans among the Great and the wealthy whom it favors, it is everywhere held in horror by the oppressed and miserable multitude, who seeing their tyrants delivered from the only curb able to restrain them, further see that along with the hope of an afterlife they lose the one consolation left to them in this one. Madame de Wolmar thus appreciating the bad impression her husband's pyrrhonism[93] would make here, and above all wanting to protect her children from so dangerous an example, has had no difficulty committing to secrecy a sincere and true man, but a discreet and simple one, free of vanity, and very far from wishing to deprive others of a good he regrets not possessing himself. He never dogmatizes, he comes to church with us, he conforms to established custom; without professing with his lips a faith he does not have, he avoids scandal, and does with respect to worship regulated by laws all that the State can exact of a Citizen.

For the nearly eight years they have been united, Madame d'Orbe alone has been in on the secret because it was confided to her. Moreover, appearances have been so well preserved, and with so little affectation, that after six weeks spent in the greatest intimacy together, I had not conceived the least suspicion, and would perhaps never have divined the truth on this point if Julie herself had not told me about it.

Several motives made her decide to confide in me. First, what reservation is compatible with the friendship that reigns between us? Was it not compounding her sorrows quite needlessly to deprive herself of the comfort of sharing them with her friend? Further, she did not want my presence to be any longer an obstacle to the discussions they often have together on a subject that is so close to her heart. Finally, knowing that you were soon to come and join us, she desired, with her husband's consent, that you be informed in advance of his sentiments; for she expects from your wisdom a supplement to our fruitless efforts, and results worthy of you.

The moment she chose to confide her pain to me made me suspect an-

other reason which she was careful not to mention to me. Her husband was leaving us; we remained alone; our hearts once had loved; they still remembered this; had they forgotten themselves for an instant everything would have delivered us up to opprobrium. I could see clearly that she had dreaded being alone with me and tried to avoid it, and the scene at Meillerie taught me only too well that the one of us who was most self-confident was the only one who should not have been.[94]

In the unjustified fear her natural timidity aroused in her, she imagined no surer precaution than to provide herself constantly with a witness who had to be respected, to call as a third party upon the scrupulous and fearsome judge who sees secret acts and can read hearts. She wrapped herself in the supreme majesty; I constantly saw God between herself and me. What criminal desire could have crossed such a safeguard? My heart was cleansed at the flame of her Zeal, and I was sharing in her virtue.

These grave discussions filled almost all our private conversations during her husband's absence, and since his return we have frequently resumed them in his presence.[95] He joins in as if they applied to someone else, and without disdaining our efforts, he often gives us good advice on the manner in which we must reason with him. It is just that which makes me despair of our success; for if he manifested less good faith, we could take on the spiritual vice that sustained his unbelief; but if it is merely a problem of persuading, where shall we seek enlightenment he has not received and reasons that have escaped him? When I have wanted to argue with him, I have seen that any arguments I might use had already been used up by Julie, and that my dryness was far from that eloquence of the heart and sweet suasion that flows from her mouth. Milord, we will never bring this man in[96]; he is too cold and is not wicked, it cannot be done by stirring his emotions; he lacks the inner conviction or conviction of sentiment, which alone can render all the others invincible.[97]

Whatever care his wife takes to hide her sadness from him, he senses it and shares it: an eye so clairvoyant cannot be fooled. He is all the more troubled by this repressed sorrow. He told me he has tried several times to yield outwardly and feign sentiments he did not possess in order to pacify her; but such baseness of soul is too foreign to him. Failing to mislead Julie, such dissimulation would only have been a new torment for her. The good faith, the candor, the union of hearts that provides comfort for so many ills would have vanished between them. Was it by making himself less respected by his wife that he could reassure her about her fears? Instead of using disguise with her, he says sincerely what he thinks, but he tells her in a tone so simple, with so little contempt for vulgar opinions, so little of that ironical pride of freethinkers,[98] that these sad admissions cause

Julie more sorrow than anger, and that, unable to communicate her sentiments and hopes to her husband, she seeks all the more carefully to surround him with the transient satisfactions to which he limits his felicity. Ah! she says with grief, if the unfortunate man makes his paradise in this world, let us at least make it as sweet for him as it can be!*[99]

The veil of sadness that this disparity of sentiments casts over their union proves better than anything else Julie's invincible sway by the consolations with which this sadness is mingled, and which she perhaps alone on earth could bring to it. All their misunderstandings, all their disputes on this important point, far from turning to bitterness, to scorn, to quarrels, always end in some emotional scene, which only makes them dearer to each other.

Yesterday the discussion having focused on that topic which recurs so often when just the three of us are alone, we fell upon the origin of evil, and I was attempting to show that not only was there no absolute and general evil in the system of beings, but that even private evils were much slighter than they seem at first glance, and that all in all they were far surpassed by private and isolated blessings. I was citing to Monsieur de Wolmar his own example, and my mind filled with the happiness of his situation, I portrayed it in phrases so true that he himself appeared moved. Such, he interrupted me, are Julie's seductions. She always puts sentiment in the place of reasons, and renders it so touching that the only answer is always to give her a kiss: might it not be from her master of philosophy, he added with a laugh, that she has learned this manner of argumentation?

Two months earlier, the pleasantry would have cruelly disconcerted me, but the time of embarrassment is past; I merely laughed in turn, and although Julie had blushed a little, she did not appear more embarrassed than I. We continued. Without wrangling over quantity of evil, Wolmar contented himself with the concession which I had no choice but to make that, little or much, nonetheless evil exists; and from this existence alone he deduced deficiency of power, of intelligence, or of goodness in the first cause.[100] I on the other hand tried to show that the origin of physical evil lay in the nature of matter, and that of moral evil in man's freedom. I maintained that God could do anything, except create other substances as perfect as his own and affording evil no purchase. We were in the heat of the dispute when I noticed that Julie had disappeared. Guess where she is, said her husband to me, seeing that I was looking for her. But, said I, she has

* How much more natural is this eminently humane sentiment than the terrible zeal of persecutors, forever busy tormenting unbelievers, as if to damn them even in this life, and act as forerunners of the demons! I will never stop repeating that such persecutors are no believers; they are scoundrels.

gone to give some instructions for her household. No, said he, she would not have taken time from this matter for others. Everything gets done without her ever leaving my side, and I never see her do a thing. Then she is in the children's room? Just as unlikely; her children are not dearer to her than my salvation. Well then, I replied, I have no idea what she is doing; but I am very sure that she is taken up only with useful cares. Still less, he said coldly; come, come; you shall see whether I have guessed right.

He set out quietly; I followed him on tiptoe. We came to the door of the study; it was closed. He opened it suddenly. Milord, what a sight! I saw Julie on bended knee, her hands clasped together, and all in tears. She hastily rose, wiping her eyes, hiding her face, and trying to get away: one has never seen such shame. Her husband did not allow her the time to flee. He ran to her in a sort of transport. Dear wife! he said, embracing her; the very ardor of your wishes betrays your cause. What do they lack to be efficacious? You see, if they were heard, they would soon be granted.[101] They shall be, she said to him in a firm and convinced tone; I do not know the time and the occasion. Would I could purchase it at the cost of my life! My last day would be the one put to best use.

Come, Milord, leave your pitiful combats behind, come fulfill a nobler duty. Does the wise man prefer the honor of killing men to the ministrations that can save one?*

LETTER VI

To Milord Edward

What! Even after leaving the army, still a trip to Paris! Are you quite forgetting Clarens, and her who lives there? Are you less dear to us than to Milord Hyde?[102] Are you more necessary to that friend than to those who await you here? You oblige us to make wishes contrary to yours, and you make me sorry I have no credit at the French Court to prevent your obtaining the passports[103] you are expecting from it. Do as you will, however: go see your worthy compatriot. Despite him, despite you, we will be avenged for this preference, and whatever pleasure it gives you to keep company with him, I know that once you are with us you will regret the time not given to us.

Upon receiving your letter I had first suspected that a secret commission.... what worthier peace mediator?.... but do Kings place their confi-

* There was in this place a long Letter from Milord Edward to Julie. Later on this Letter will be evoked; but for good reasons I have been obliged to suppress it.

dence in virtuous men? Do they dare hear the truth? do they even know how to honor true merit?..... No, no, dear Edward, you are not made for the office, and I think too well of you to believe that had you not been born a Peer of England, you would ever have become one.

Come, Friend, you will be better off at Clarens than at Court! O what a winter we are going to spend all together, if the hope of our reunion does not deceive me! Each day contributes to it by bringing back here one of those privileged souls that are so dear to each other, so worthy to love each other, and seem to be awaiting only you to dispense with the rest of creation! When you learned of the happy coincidence that led the Baron d'Étange's adverse party to pass through here, you foresaw all that must come of this encounter,* and what really did come of it. That old litigant, although almost as unbending and all of a piece as his adversary, was unable to resist the sway that has subjugated us all. After seeing Julie, hearing her, conversing with her, he was ashamed of litigating against her father. He left for Bern so well disposed, and the conciliation is presently so well under way, that the Baron's last letter gives us to expect him back in a few days.

That much you will already have learned from Monsieur de Wolmar. But what you probably do not yet know is that Madame d'Orbe having finally put an end to her business has been here since Thursday, and will from now on have no other abode than her friend's. As I had been advised of the day of her arrival, I went to meet her unbeknownst to Madame de Wolmar whom she meant to surprise, and having met her this side of Lutry,[104] I retraced my steps with her.

I found her more lively and charming than ever, but moody, distracted, not listening, answering even less, talking disconnectedly and in bursts, in sum a prey to that anxiety one cannot fend off when one is about to obtain what one has strongly desired. You would have said she trembled at each moment lest she have to go back home. This departure, although long deferred, was accomplished so hastily that mistress and domestics were all aflutter. There was a laughable disorder in the hand baggage that was brought in. Each time the chambermaid feared she had forgotten something, Claire assured her she had had it put in the trunk of the Carriage, and the amusing thing when they looked was that there was nothing there at all.

As she did not want Julie to hear her carriage, she got out in the avenue, crossed the courtyard running like a madwoman, and rushed up the stairs

* It can be seen that several intermediate letters are missing here, as in many other places. The reader will say that one gets away too conveniently with such omissions, and I share perfectly his opinion.

so fast that she had to pause for breath after the first flight before she could finish climbing. Monsieur de Wolmar came to meet her; she was unable to utter a single word.

Opening the door of her room, I saw Julie seated facing the window and holding little Henriette on her knees, as she often did. Claire had prepared a big speech after her manner laced with sentiment and levity; but as she set foot on the threshold of the room, the speech, the levity, were all forgot; she flew to her friend shouting in an indescribable rapture: Cousin, forever, forever until death! Henriette upon seeing her mother leapt and ran to meet her also shouting: *Maman! maman!* with all her strength and she ran into her so hard that the poor child fell from the blow. This sudden apparition, this fall, the joy, the commotion seized Julie to such a point, that having arisen and extending her arms with a very sharp cry, she sank back into the chair and swooned. Claire while trying to lift up her daughter, saw her friend go pale, hesitated, not knowing to which she should turn. Finally, seeing me lift up Henriette, she rushed to assist the helpless Julie, and fell onto her in the same condition.[105]

Henriette seeing them both motionless started crying and screamed, which brought Fanchon running; the former ran to her mother's side, the latter to her mistress's. For my part, seized, transported, out of my senses, I strode erratically about the room not knowing what I was doing, with broken exclamations, and in a convulsive spasm I was unable to control. Wolmar himself, the cold Wolmar felt stirred. O sentiment, sentiment! sweet life of the soul! where is the heart of iron thou hast not touched? where is the unhappy mortal from whom thou hast never wrested tears? Instead of running to Julie's side, this happy husband threw himself into an armchair to watch avidly this ravishing spectacle. Have no fear, he said, perceiving our solicitude. These Scenes of pleasure and joy exhaust nature for a moment only to revive her with a new vigor; they are never dangerous. Let me savor the happiness which I am enjoying and which you share. What must it be for you? I never experienced anything like it, and I am the least happy of the six.

Milord, by this first moment you may gauge the rest. This reunion gave rise throughout the house to a reverberation of gladness, and a fermentation that has not yet calmed down. Julie was beside herself and I had never seen her in such a state of agitation; it was impossible to turn our minds to anything all day long but seeing and embracing each other endlessly with renewed transports. The Salon d'Apollon never even occurred to us; pleasure was all about us, there was no reason why it should come to mind. We were barely cool-headed enough the next morning to put together a celebration. Without Wolmar it would all have gone awry; everyone dressed

his best. No work was allowed except what was needed for the entertainments. The celebration was carried out, not with pomp, but with delirium; there reigned a commotion that made it touching, and confusion was its loveliest ornament.

The morning was spent installing Madame d'Orbe in her position as Intendant or house-stewardess, and she hastened to exercise its functions with a childish alacrity that made us laugh. When they entered the lovely Salon for dinner the two Cousins saw on every side their ciphers joined, and fashioned from flowers.[106] Julie immediately guessed who had thought this up; she embraced me in a paroxysm of joy. Claire contrary to her former custom hesitated to do the same.[107] Wolmar chided her for it; she decided, blushing, to imitate her cousin. That blush, of which I was too aware, had an effect on me that I cannot describe; but I did not find myself in her arms without some emotion.

In the afternoon there was a lovely collation in the gynaeceum, where the master and I were admitted for the occasion. The men did target shooting for a stake put up by Madame d'Orbe. The newcomer won, although less practiced than the others; Claire was not deceived by his skill. Hanz himself made no mistake about it, and refused to accept the prize; but all his comrades forced him to, and you can imagine that this graciousness on their part was not wasted.

In the evening, the whole household, with the addition of three persons,[108] assembled to dance. Claire seemed to be decked by the hand of the Graces; she had never been as brilliant as on this day. She danced, she chatted, she laughed, she gave her instructions, she had everything in hand. She had sworn she would wear me out, and after five or six very lively country dances all in a row, she did not fail to reproach me as usual that I danced like a philosopher. I told her, for my part, that she danced like an imp, did scarcely less mischief, and that I was afraid she would let me rest neither by day nor by night. On the contrary, she said, here is something that will make you sleep soundly; and at once, she again asked me to dance.

She was indefatigable; but the same was not true of Julie; she could scarcely hold herself up; her knees trembled as she danced; she was so moved she was incapable of gaiety. Frequently one could see tears of joy flowing from her eyes; she watched her Cousin with a sort of enthrallment; she liked to think of herself as the stranger who was the object of the celebration, and look on Claire as the housemistress who staged it. After the supper, I set off rockets I had brought from China, which made quite an impression. We stayed up very late into the night; finally we had to part; Madame d'Orbe was weary or ought to have been, and Julie insisted we go to bed early.

Slowly calm is returning, and with it order. Claire, as jaunty as she is, knows how to assume, when she so chooses, an imposingly authoritative tone. Moreover she has sense, exquisite discernment, Wolmar's penetration, Julie's goodness, and although extremely liberal, she always possesses considerable prudence as well. So much so that having been left a widow so young, and entrusted with her daughter's patrimony,[109] the possessions of the one and the other have only prospered in her hands; thus there is no cause to fear that under her command the household will be less well governed than before. This gives Julie the pleasure of devoting herself entirely to the occupation that is the most to her taste, namely the children's education, and I have no doubt that Henriette will benefit immensely from all the cares of which one of her mothers has relieved the other. I say her mothers; for to see the way they behave with her, it is difficult to make out which one is genuine, and some strangers who came here today are or appear to be still in doubt on that score. Indeed, both call her, Henriette, or, my daughter, indifferently. She calls the one *maman*, and the other *petite-maman*; the same tenderness is in evidence on either side; she obeys both equally. If they ask the Ladies to which one she belongs, each replies, to me. If they question Henriette, it turns out that she has two mothers; which is enough to bewilder anybody. Yet the most perceptive finally decide in Julie's favor. Henriette whose father was blond is blond like her and resembles her a great deal.[110] A certain maternal tenderness appears even more clearly in her ever so gentle eyes than in Claire's more playful glances. When she is with Julie the little one adopts a more respectful attitude, observes herself more closely. Instinctively she places herself more often at her side, because Julie more often has something to tell her. It must be confessed that the appearances are all in favor of the petite-maman, and I have noticed that this mistake is so agreeable to the two Cousins that it could well sometimes be willful, and become a means of cajoling them.

Milord, in a fortnight no one will be missing here except you. Once you are here, we shall have to think ill of any man whose heart seeks anywhere else on earth virtues, pleasures he has not found in this house.

LETTER VII

To Milord Edward

For three days I have been trying every evening to write to you. But after a day's work, sleep overtakes me as soon as I return to my room: in the morning right at daybreak we have to get back to the job. A drunkenness

headier than wine's fills my soul with a delightful thrill, and I cannot spare a moment from pleasures that have become entirely new to me.

I cannot conceive how any habitation could displease me with the company I find in this one: but do you know why it is that Clarens pleases me for itself? It is that here I really have the sense of being in the country, and that it is almost the first time I have been able to say as much. City people do not know how to like the Country; they do not even know how to act there: when they are there they scarcely know what to do. They disdain its labors, they are ignorant of its pleasures; they are at home as if they were in a foreign country, I am not surprised that they dislike it. One has to be a villager in the village, or not go there at all; for what does one go there to do? The inhabitants of Paris who think they go to the country do not go there at all; they take Paris with them. Singers, wits, authors, parasites are the train that follows them. Cards, music, comedy are their sole occupation there.*[111] Their table is set as in Paris; they eat at the same times of day, they are served the same dishes, with the same pomp, everything they do is the same; they might as well have stayed there; for however rich they may be and however much care they have taken, they always feel something is missing, and cannot bring all of Paris along with them. Thus this variety that is so dear to them flees them; they never know but one manner of living, and are ever bored with it.

Country labor is pleasant to contemplate, and nothing about it is hard enough in itself to stir compassion. Its end of public and private utility makes it engaging; and moreover, it is man's first vocation, it recalls to the mind a pleasant notion, and to the heart all the charms of the golden age.[112] The imagination does not remain cold at the sight of plowing and harvesting. The simplicity of pastoral and rural life always has something about it that is moving. One has only to look at the meadows filled with folk tossing hay and singing, and herds scattered in the distance, to be overcome little by little with emotion without knowing why. Thus sometimes the voice of nature still softens our fierce hearts, and although we hear it with futile regret, it is so sweet that we never hear it without pleasure.

I admit that the misery that fills the fields in some countries where the publican devours the fruits of the earth, the ferocious avarice of a miserly farmer, the unbending rigor of an inhuman master[113] deprive these tableaux of much of their appeal. Scrawny horses about to expire under blows; wretched peasants extenuated with hunger, weary to the point of exhaus-

* One should add hunting. Even then they do it so comfortably that they get from it not the half of the fatigue or pleasure they should. But I shall not go into this topic of the hunt here; there is too much to say about it for me to treat it in a note. I shall perhaps have occasion to bring it up elsewhere.

tion and covered with rags, hamlets of hovels, present a sorry spectacle to the eyes; one almost regrets being a man when one remembers the wretched whose blood one must consume.[114] But how charming to behold good and wise managers making of the cultivation of their lands the instrument of their benefits, their entertainments, their pleasures, distributing by great handfuls the gifts of providence; fattening everything around them, men and beasts, with the goods overflowing from their barns, their cellars, their lofts; accumulating abundance and joy about them, and turning the labor that enriches them into a perpetual feast! How can anyone resist the flattering illusion these goods engender? You forget your own era and contemporaries; you are transported to the time of the patriarchs; you wish you could yourself put a hand to the task, share in the rustic labors, and the happiness that attaches to them. O times of love and innocence, when women were tender and modest, when men were simple and lived in contentment![115] O Rachel! Maid so charming and constantly loved, happy he who to win thee did not regret fourteen years of slavery![116] O gentle pupil of Naomi, happy the good old man whose feet and heart thou didst warm.[117] No, never did beauty reign with greater empire than amidst rural chores. It is here that the Graces are enthroned, that simplicity adorns them, that gaiety animates them, and that you have to worship them despite yourself. Forgive me, Milord, I return to us.

For a month the warm days of autumn had been preparing a bountiful grape harvest; the first frosts have brought its inception*; the scorched foliage leaving the bunches of grapes exposed displays to the eye the gifts of father Lyaeus,[118] and seems to invite mortals to take possession of them. All the vines laden with this beneficial fruit which Heaven offers to the unfortunate to make them forget their misery; the sound of the barrels, the Vats, the Légrefass**[119] being banded on every side; the singing of the women picking grapes with which the hillsides echo; the continual motion of those bringing the grapes to the press; the raspy sound of rustic instruments spurring them on to work; the endearing and touching tableau of a general exhilaration that seems at this moment to extend over the surface of the earth; even the veil of mist that the sun raises in the morning like a playhouse curtain to discover to the eye such a charming spectacle; everything conspires to give it a festive air, and this festivity becomes only the more beautiful upon reflection, when it occurs to us that it is the only one in which men have succeeded in combining the agreeable and the useful.[120]

* They harvest grapes very late in the Vaud country, because the principal crop is in white wines, and frost does them good.

** A sort of hogshead or large barrel in these parts.

Monsieur de Wolmar whose best lands here consist in vineyards has made all the necessary preparations in advance. The vats, the winepress, the cellar, the casks await only the sweet liquor for which they are destined. Madame de Wolmar has assumed responsibility for the harvest, the selection of workers, the ordering and distribution of tasks are her province. Madame d'Orbe presides over the harvest feasts, and the wages of the day-workers in accordance with the established system, the laws of which are never countervened here. My job is to oversee the winepress, to assure that Julie's directions are observed there, since her head cannot stand the vapor of the vats, and Claire did not fail to applaud this assignment, as one entirely within the competence of a drinker.

The tasks being thus allocated, the occupation common to all for filling in the gaps is that of grape-gathering. Everyone is afoot in early morning; we congregate to head for the vineyards. Madame d'Orbe, who never has enough to do to absorb her energy, additionally takes it upon herself to have the lazy warned and to scold them, and I can boast that she acquits herself of this duty in my respect with a malicious vigilance. As for the old Baron, while we are all working, he goes out walking with a rifle, and comes to take me away from the women gatherers from time to time to go shoot some thrush with him, to which end they do not fail to say that I have secretly enlisted him, so that I am little by little losing the name of philosopher to acquire that of loafer, which ultimately is not very different.

You can see from what I have just intimated to you about the Baron that our reconciliation is sincere, and that Wolmar has reason to be satisfied with his second test.*[121] I, hate my friend's father! No, had I been his son,[122] I would not have more perfectly honored him. In truth, I know no man more upright, more forthright, more generous, more respectable in every way than this fine gentleman. But the oddness of his prejudices is strange. Since he has been sure that I could never enter his family, there is no honor he has not extended to me; and so long as I am not his son-in-law, he would quite willingly place himself beneath me. The only thing I cannot forgive him is that when we are alone he sometimes teases the so-

* This will be better understood through the following extract from a Letter of Julie's, which is not in this collection.

"This, Monsieur de Wolmar said, drawing me aside, is the second test I had in mind for him. If he had not been affectionate to your father I would have mistrusted him. But, I said, how can you reconcile this affection and your test with the antipathy you yourself have detected between them? It no longer exists, he replied; your father's prejudices have done St. Preux all the harm they could do him: he has nothing more to fear from them, he no longer hates them, he pities them. The Baron for his part no longer fears him; he has a good heart, he senses that he has done him much harm, he pities him. I see they will get along very well together, and will see each other with pleasure. Therefore from this moment on I rely on him implicitly."

called philosopher about his former lessons. These pleasantries are bitter to me and I always receive them very ill; but he laughs at my anger, and says: let's go shoot some thrush, we have pressed the argument sufficiently. Then he cries out as we go by: Claire, Claire! a good supper for your master, for I am about to make him work up an appetite. Indeed, at his age he runs through the vineyards with his rifle just as vigorously as I, and shoots incomparably better. I am somewhat avenged for his teasing by the fact that in front of his daughter he no longer dares breathe, and the little schoolgirl inspires no less awe in her own father than in her preceptor. I return to our grape harvest.

In the week we have devoted to this agreeable labor we have gotten scarcely halfway through the job. Over and above the wines destined for sale and for ordinary stocks, which require no other confection than careful storage, the good fairy prepares other, finer ones for our drinkers, and I assist in the magical operations I told you about, to extract from a single vineyard wines of every country. For the one she has us pinch the bunches when they are ripe and let them wither on the stock in the sun; for the other she has the grapes stalked and sorted before putting them into the vat; for another she has red grapes picked before sunrise, and gently taken to the press still covered with their bloom and dew, to press a white wine from them; she prepares a sweetened wine by mixing must reduced to syrup over the fire into the barrels, a dry wine by preventing it from working,[123] an absinth wine for the stomach,* a muscat wine with simples. All these different wines have their particular preparation; all these concoctions are healthy and natural: and so it is that thrifty ingenuity makes up for diversity of soils, and concentrates twenty climates into a single one.[124]

You could scarcely imagine the zeal, the gaiety with which all this is performed. We sing, we laugh all day long, and the work goes only the better for it. Everyone lives in the greatest familiarity; everyone is equal, and no one forgets himself. The Ladies affect no airs, the peasant women are decent, the men bantering and not coarse. Everyone tries to think of the best songs, tell the best tales, make the best quips. The very proximity gives rise to jocular quarrels, and we only provoke each other in order to show how sure we are of each other. Nor do we then return home to go our gentlemanly ways; we spend the whole day in the vineyards; Julie has had a shed put up where we can go and warm up when we are cold, and where we take refuge in case of rain. We dine with the peasants and when they do, just as we work alongside them. We eat with good appetite their somewhat coarse, but good and healthy, soup, full of excellent vegetables. We

* In Switzerland they drink a lot of absinth wine; and in general as the Alpine herbs have more virtue than in the plains, they make wider use of infusions.

do not snicker haughtily at their awkward airs and boorish compliments; to put them at ease we lend ourselves to such things without affectation. They do not fail to notice this goodwill; they are appreciative of it, and seeing that for them we are willing to leave our proper places, they stick all the more willingly to their own. At dinnertime, the children are brought, and spend the remainder of the day in the vineyards. With what joy do these good villagers see them arrive! O blessed children, they say hugging them in their robust arms, may the good Lord prolong your days at the expense of ours! Do as your father and mothers,[125] and be like them the benediction of the countryside! Often, recollecting that most of these men have borne arms and know how to handle a sword and musket as well as a pruning-knife and hoe; upon seeing Julie in their midst, so charming and so respected, receiving, she and her children, their touching acclamations, I am reminded of the illustrious and virtuous Agrippina presenting her son to Germanicus's troops.[126] Julie! incomparable woman! You wield in the simplicity of private life the despotic empire of wisdom and beneficence: you are for the whole country a dear and sacred trust which each individual would be willing to defend and preserve at the price of his own blood, and you live more securely, more honorably in the midst of an entire population that loves you, than Kings surrounded by all their soldiers.

In the evening we all return gaily together. We feed and lodge the workers the whole length of the grape harvest, and even on Sunday after the evening sermon we join with them and dance until supper. Nor on the other days do we separate from them by returning to the house, except for the Baron who never sups and retires very early, and Julie who with her children goes up to his apartment until he goes to bed. With this exception, from the moment we take up the activity of grape-gatherer until it ends, we no longer admix city life with country life. These saturnalia are far more agreeable and proper than the Romans'.[127] The reversal they affected was too superficial to instruct either master or slave: but the gentle equality that prevails here re-establishes nature's order, constitutes a form of instruction for some, a consolation for others, and a bond of friendship for all.*[128]

The assembly hall is an old-fashioned Room with a large fireplace for a

* If from this arises a common condition owing to the festive occasion, not less pleasant to those who stoop than to those who rise, does it not follow that all conditions are practically indifferent in themselves, provided one can and wishes to get outside them occasionally? Beggars are unhappy because they are always beggars; Kings are unhappy because they are always Kings. The middle conditions, which one can more easily get outside of, offer pleasures above and below oneself; they extend also the insights of those who fill them, by giving them more prejudices to learn about and more levels to compare. That, it seems to me, is the principal reason why it is generally in intermediate stations that one finds the happiest and most sensible men.

good, big fire. It is lighted by three lamps, to which Monsieur de Wolmar has only added tin bonnets to intercept the smoke and reflect the light. To avoid envy and regrets we try not to display anything to these good folks' eyes that they could not find in their own homes, to show them no opulence other than the choice of the good among common things and a little more liberality in its distribution. The supper is served on two long tables. The luxury and pomp of feasts are absent, but plenty and joy are present. Everyone takes a seat at the table, masters, day-workers, domestics; each rises to serve indiscriminately, without exception, without preference, and the service is always performed with grace and pleasure. One drinks at will, liberty having no limits but those of propriety. The presence of masters so respected acts as a restraint on everyone and does not inhibit informality and merriment. Should it happen that someone forgets himself, they do not disturb the festivities with reprimands, but he is dismissed without remission the very next day.

I take advantage too of the pleasures of the locality and the season. I rediscover the freedom of living in the Valaisan manner, and rather frequently drinking straight wine: but I never drink any that has not been poured by the hand of one of the two Cousins. They take charge of measuring my thirst by my strength and keeping an eye on my reason. Who knows better than they how it should be governed, and the art of taking it away from me and giving it back? If the day's labor, the duration and mirth of the meal give more strength to the wine poured by these dear hands, I let my transports breathe forth without constraint; there is nothing in them that I need to hush, nothing that is curbed by the wise Wolmar's presence. I do not fear lest his enlightened eye read what is in the depths of my heart; and when a tender memory seeks to reawaken therein, one look from Claire intercepts it, one look from Julie makes me blush at it.

After supper we stay up another hour or two scutching hemp[129]; everyone sings a song by turns. Sometimes the women gatherers sing all together in chorus, or else alternatively by single voice and refrain. Most of these songs are old romances[130] whose tunes lack piquancy; but something ancient and sweet about them is ultimately touching. The words are simple, naive, often sad; they please nonetheless. We cannot keep ourselves, Claire from smiling, Julie from blushing, I from sighing, when we recognize in these songs phrases and expressions we used in years gone by. Then casting my eyes on them and remembering distant times, a shuddering takes hold of me, an unbearable weight suddenly falls on my heart, and leaves me a grim impression that can only with difficulty be erased. Yet I find in these evenings a sort of charm I cannot explain to you, and which I

nonetheless very much feel. This congregation of the various estates, the simplicity of this occupation, the thought of relaxation, of harmony, of tranquillity, the sentiment of peace it brings to the soul, has something stirring about it that disposes one to find these songs more engaging. This concert of women's voices is itself not without sweetness. For my part, I am convinced that of all harmonies, there is none so agreeable as singing in unison, and that if we need chords, it is because our taste has been depraved. Indeed, is not all harmony to be found in any sound whatsoever? And what can we add to it without distorting the proportions nature has established in the relative strength of harmonious sounds? By doubling some and not others, by not reinforcing them to the same degree, do we not instantly take away these proportions?[131] Nature has made everything as good as it could be; but we want to do still better, and we spoil everything.[132]

There is considerable emulation in the evening's work as in the day's, and the trick I tried to get by with yesterday brought down on me a small indignity. As I am not among the most adroit scutchers and am prone to distraction, tired of always being noted for the poorest performance, I was quietly pulling some of my neighbors' stalks with my foot to make my pile bigger; but that pitiless Madame d'Orbe having spotted this signalled to Julie, who having caught me in the act, sternly scolded me. Mr. Scamp, she said to me out loud, nothing unfair, even in jest; that is how one acquires the habit of being wicked in earnest, and what is worse, continuing to jest.*[133]

Such is the way the evening is spent. When the time to retire draws near, Madame de Wolmar says, let's go set off the fireworks. At that moment, everyone takes his pack of hemp stalks, the honorable sign of his labor; we carry them triumphantly to the middle of the courtyard, gather them together in a pile, we make a trophy of it, and set it aflame; but this honor does not go to just anybody; Julie decides it, by presenting the torch to him or her who that particular evening has performed the most work; were it herself, she takes credit for it without ado. The august ceremony is accompanied with acclamations and applause. The stalks make a clear and bright flame that rises to the heavens, a joyous bonfire around which we skip, we laugh. Then the whole assembly is offered a drink; each one drinks to the health of the victor and goes to bed content with a day spent in labor, merriment, innocence, which one would not be unhappy to begin anew the next day, the day after, and his whole life long.[134]

* The man with the butter! It seems to me that this warning would suit you rather well.

LETTER VIII

To Monsieur de Wolmar[135]

Reap, dear Wolmar, the fruit of your labors. Accept the tribute of a cleansed heart, which with such travail you have rendered worthy of being offered you. Never did a man undertake what you have undertaken, never did a man attempt what you have achieved; never did a grateful and sensible soul feel what you have inspired in me. Mine had lost its resilience, its vigor, its being; you have restored everything to me. I was dead to virtues as I was to happiness: I owe you this moral life into which I feel myself being reborn. O my Benefactor! O my Father! By giving myself entirely to you, I can offer you, as to God himself, only the gifts I have received from you.

Must I confess to you my weakness and my fears? Up until now I have always had misgivings about myself. Not a week ago I was ashamed of my heart and believed that all your goodness was wasted.[136] That moment was cruel, and discouraging for virtue; thanks to Heaven, thanks to you, it has gone away never to return. I no longer believe I am healed merely because you tell me so, but because I can feel it. I no longer need you to reassure me about myself. You have put me in a position to reassure myself. I had to sever myself from you and from her in order to find out what I could become without your support. It is far from the places she inhabits that I am learning no longer to fear drawing near to them.

I am writing to Madame d'Orbe the details of our journey. I will not repeat them to you here. I am willing for you to know all about my weaknesses, but have not the strength to relate them to you. Dear Wolmar, this is my last fault; I already feel so far from it that I do not recall it without some pride; but the moment is still so recent that I cannot confess it without pain. How could you who had it in you to forgive my transgressions fail to forgive the shame that their repentance has caused?

My happiness is no longer wanting in anything, Milord has told me everything. Dear friend, I shall therefore belong to you? I shall therefore raise your children?[137] The eldest of the three shall raise the two others? How ardently I have desired it! How the hope of being found worthy of such a marvelous responsibility redoubled my attentions to answer to yours! How many times did I venture to show my eagerness on that score to Julie! With what pleasure did I often interpret in my favor your statements and hers! But although she appreciated my zeal and appeared to approve its objective, I did not see her enter exactly enough into my views to dare broach them more openly. I felt that this honor had to be merited and

not requested. I was awaiting from you and from her this token of your confidence and esteem. I have not been deceived in my hope: my friends, believe me, you will not be deceived in yours.

You know that following our conversations about your children's education I had jotted down a few thoughts derived from them and which met your approval. Since my departure new reflections have occurred to me on the same subject, and I have reduced the whole into a sort of system which I will send to you once I have worked it out better, so that you may examine it in turn.[138] It is only subsequent to our arrival in Rome that I hope to be able to put it into a shape to be shown to you. This system begins where Julie's leaves off, or rather it is merely its sequel and development; for everything consists in not spoiling the man of nature by appropriating him for society.

I have recovered my reason through your ministries; having once again become free and healthy of heart, I feel loved by all those who are dear to me; the most enchanting future opens up before me; my situation should be delightful, but my soul is doomed to be never at peace. As we near the end of our journey, I can see this is the time when my illustrious friend's fate will be played out; it is I who must, in a manner of speaking, determine it. Shall I be able to do at least once for him what he has so often done for me? Shall I know how to fulfill worthily the most important duty in my life? Dear Wolmar, I carry all your lessons in my heart, but to know how to make them useful why can I not likewise carry your wisdom! Ah! If I can some day see Edward happy; if in accordance with his plan and yours, we all reunite never again to part, what will remain for me to wish for? One thing only, the realization of which is neither in your power nor in mine, nor in anyone's on earth; but in the power of him who owes your wife's virtues a recompense, and keeps a secret account of your acts of generosity.

LETTER IX

To Madame d'Orbe

Where are you, charming Cousin? Where are you, sweet confidante of this frail heart that you share for so many reasons, and that you have so often comforted? Come, let it pour out to yours today the confession of its last error. Does it not always fall to you to purify it, and can it continue to reproach itself for wrongs it has confessed to you? No, I am no longer the same, and I owe this change to you: you have given me a new heart, and it offers you its firstfruits; but I shall not consider myself delivered from the

one I leave behind until I have deposited it in your hands. O you who witnessed its birth, receive its lasts sighs!

Would you ever have thought this possible? The moment of my life when I was most pleased with myself was when I left you. Having recovered from my prolonged distractions, I set that moment as the belated date of my return to my duties. I was finally beginning to pay the immense debts of friendship by tearing myself from an abode so dear to follow a benefactor, a sage, who pretending he had need of my assistance, put the success of his own to the test. The more pain that departure cost me, the more I prided myself on such a sacrifice. After wasting half of my life nurturing an unhappy passion, I was devoting the other half to justifying it, to paying through my virtues a worthier homage to her who had so long received all those of my heart. I solemnly marked the first of my days on which I was making neither you, nor her, nor anyone at all whom I cherished ashamed of me.

Milord Edward had feared the tearfulness of farewells, and we meant to leave without attracting attention: but while everyone was still asleep, we were unable to deceive your vigilant friendship. When we noticed your door was cracked and your chambermaid keeping watch, when we saw you coming to fetch us, when we entered and found a tea table prepared, the similarity of circumstances carried me back to other times, and comparing this departure with the one it reminded me of, I felt so different from what I was then that, congratulating myself for having Edward as witness to these differences, I had hopes of making him thoroughly forget in Milan the unworthy scene at Besançon.[139] Never had I felt so much courage in me; it gave me great pride to show it to you; for you I paraded a resolve you had never seen in me, and gloried as I left you in appearing for a moment to your eyes such as I was going to be. This thought added to my courage, I took strength from your good opinion of me, and perhaps I would have bade you farewell with a dry eye if your tears rolling down my cheek had not forced mine to mingle with them.

I left with a heart filled with all my duties, especially mindful of those your friendship imposes on me, and firmly determined to spend the rest of my life deserving it. Edward reviewing all my faults, placed before me once more a tableau that was unembellished, and I could tell from his just rigor in accusing me of so many weaknesses that he had little fear of imitating them. Yet he pretended this was what he feared; he talked to me with apprehension about his journey to Rome and the unworthy attachments that called him back there despite himself; but I easily gathered that he exacerbated his own dangers to occupy my attention more fully with them, and get me still farther away from those to which I was exposed.

As we were nearing Villeneuve,[140] a lackey who was riding a bad horse

took a fall and suffered a slight bruise to his head. His master had him bled and decided to spend the night there. After dining early, we took horses to go to see the Salt pond at Bex,[141] and as Milord had particular reasons that made this inspection of interest to him, I noted the measurements and design of the graduation building[142]; it was nightfall by the time we returned to Villeneuve. After supper, we chatted over some punch, and stayed up rather late. It was then that he told me of the duties being conferred on me, and of what had been done to make this arrangement realizable. You can imagine the effect this news had on me; such a conversation did not induce sleep. Nonetheless we finally had to go to bed.

Upon entering the room I was assigned, I recognized it as the same one I had earlier occupied on the way to Sion.[143] At this sight, I received an impression it would be difficult to describe to you. I was so deeply struck by it that I seemed instantly to revert to all I was then: ten years of my life vanished and all my misfortunes were forgotten.[144] Alas! this illusion was short-lived, and the second instant made the weight of all my former sufferings more overwhelming. What sad reflections succeeded this initial enchantment! What painful comparisons came to my mind! Charms of earliest youth, delights of first love, why do you reappear once more to this heart crushed with woes and weighted down with itself? O happy, happy time, thou art no more![145] I was in love, I was loved. I surrendered myself in the peace of innocence to the transports of a requited love; I savored in long draughts the delightful sentiment that put life in me. The flattering vapor of hope made my heart drunk. An ecstasy, a ravishment, a delirium absorbed all my faculties: Ah! on the cliffs of Meillerie, amidst winter and ice, with horrible chasms in front of me, what being on earth enjoyed a fate comparable to mine?.... and I wept! and I thought I was to be pitied! and sorrow dared come near me!.... what then shall I do today when I have possessed everything, lost everything?.... I have indeed deserved my misery, since I have so little measured my happiness!.... I wept then?.... you wept?.... Wretch, you no longer weep.... you have not even the right to weep.... Would she were dead! I dared to cry out in a transport of rage; yes, I would be less unhappy: I would dare to surrender to my sufferings; I would embrace her cold tomb without remorse, my regrets would be worthy of her; I would say: she hears my cries, she sees my tears, my moans touch her, she approves and accepts my pure homage.... I would at least have the hope of joining her again.... But she lives; she is happy!.... she lives, and her life is my death, and her happiness is my torture, and Heaven having torn her from me, deprives me even of the comfort of mourning her!.... she lives, but not for me: she lives for my despair. I am a hundred times farther from her than if she were no more.

I went to bed with these sad thoughts. They followed me during my

10. Whither wilst thou flee? The Phantom is in thine heart.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

sleep, and filled it with deathly images. The bitter pains, the losses, death itself paraded before my eyes, and all the ills I had suffered reappeared in my dream in a hundred new shapes, to torment me once more. One dream especially, the cruellest of them all, pursued me tenaciously, and from phantom to phantom, all their blurred apparitions always ended up with that particular one.

I could see your friend's worthy mother, on her deathbed, and her daughter on her knees beside her, melting in tears, kissing her hands as she breathed her last breath. I saw again this scene you depicted to me years ago, and which will never leave my memory. O my mother, said Julie in a voice that grieved my soul, she to whom you gave life is taking yours away! Ah! take it back, without you it is to me but a baneful gift. My child, answered her tender mother,.... we must fulfill our destiny.... God is just.... you will be a mother in your turn.... she was unable to go on.... I wanted to lift my eyes toward her; I no longer saw her. I saw Julie in her place; I saw her, I recognized her, although her face was covered with a veil. I uttered a cry; I rushed forward to push aside the veil; I could not reach her; I stretched forth my arms, I groped desperately and touched nothing. Friend, calm yourself, she said to me in a feeble voice. The fateful veil covers me, no hand can push it aside.[146] Hearing this, I struggled and renewed my effort; this effort awoke me: I found myself in my bed, overwhelmed with fatigue, and drenched in sweat and tears.

Soon my fright dissipated, exhaustion put me back to sleep; the same dream brought me the same turmoil; I awoke, and went back to sleep for the third time. Again this lugubrious spectacle, again the same trappings of death; again this impenetrable veil eluded my grasp and concealed from my eyes the expiring object it covered.

At this last awakening my terror was so great I could not overcome it even awake. I leapt from the bed, not knowing what I was doing. I began to roam about the room, frightened like a child by the shadows of night, I could see myself surrounded by phantoms, and my ear still echoed with that plaintive voice the sound of which I never heard without emotion. As the twilight was beginning to illuminate objects, all it did was to transform them at the whim of my troubled imagination.[147] My horror augmented and took away my judgment: after having some trouble finding the door, I fled from my room; I bolted into Edward's: I opened his curtain and fell on his bed crying out breathlessly: It's all over, I shall never see her again! He awoke with a start, reached for his weapons, thinking he was being attacked by a thief. At that moment, he recognized me; I recognized myself, and for the second time in my life, I found myself before him in the consternation you may imagine.

He had me sit down, compose myself and speak. As soon as he learned what it was about, he wanted to make light of the thing; but seeing that I was greatly disturbed, and that this impression would not be easy to dispel, he changed his tone. You deserve neither my friendship nor my esteem, he said to me rather harshly; if I had taken a quarter of the trouble with my lackey that I have with you, I would have made a man of him; but you are nothing. Ah! I said to him, it is too true. Everything good about me came from her: I shall never see her again; now I am nothing. He smiled, and embraced me. Collect yourself today, he said to me, tomorrow you will be reasonable. I assume the responsibility for the outcome. After that, changing the subject, he proposed we set out. I agreed, we had the horses bridled, we got dressed. As we got into the chaise, Milord said a word into the driver's ear, and we set out.

We were going along in silence. I was so absorbed by my ominous dream that I neither heard nor saw a thing. I did not even notice that the lake, which was on my right the day before, was now on my left. It took the sound of paving stones to bring me out of my lethargy, and cause me to perceive, with an astonishment easily understood, that we were entering Clarens. Three hundred paces from the gate Milord stopped the chaise, and drawing me aside, You see my design, he said; it needs no explanation. Go, visionary, he added, pressing my hand; go see her. You are lucky to be exhibiting your follies only to people who love you! Make haste, I will wait for you; but above all do not return until you have rent that fatal veil woven in your brain.

What could I say? I set off without answering. I walked hurriedly, but reflection slowed my pace as I neared the house. What kind of role was I about to play? How dared I show myself? With what pretext could I cover this unexpected return? With what effrontery was I going to pretext my ridiculous terrors, and sustain the generous Wolmar's scornful look? The closer I came, the more my fright seemed to me childish, and my extravagance looked pathetic. Yet a dark foreboding still troubled me, and I felt not at all reassured. I went forward although slowly, and I was already near the courtyard, when I heard the door of the Elysium open and close again. Not seeing anyone emerge, I went around the outside, and came up along the bank as close to the aviary as I could. I soon surmised that someone was approaching. Then listening closely, I heard you speaking together, and, although I was unable to make out a single word, I found something ineffably languid and tender in the sound of your voice which caused me some emotion, and in hers an affectionate and sweet tone as usual, but peaceful and serene, which brought me to in an instant, and truly awakened me from my dream.

Forthwith I felt so changed that I mocked myself and my vain alarms. Realizing that I had only a hedge and a few bushes to cross in order to see in full life and health her whom I had thought I would never see again, I forever foreswore my fears, my horror, my phantasms, and with no difficulty made up my mind to leave without even seeing her. Claire, I swear to you, not only did I not see her; but I retraced my steps proud of not having seen her, of not having been weak and credulous to the very end, and of having at least done the honor to Edward's friend of placing him above a phantasm.

This, dear Cousin, is what I had to tell you and the last confession I still had to make to you. The details of the rest of our journey are quite devoid of interest; it suffices me to protest to you that since then not only is Milord satisfied with me, but I am even more so with myself now that I feel my complete recovery, much better than he can see it. For fear of leaving him needlessly wary, I concealed from him that I had not seen you two. When he asked me whether the veil was lifted, I replied yes without hesitation, and we spoke no more of it. Yes, Cousin, it is forever lifted, that veil that long clouded my reason. All my anxious transports are spent. I perceive all my duties and take them to heart. Both of you are dearer to me than ever; but my heart no longer distinguishes you from each other, and does not separate the Inseparables.

We arrived the day before yesterday in Milan. We will depart again the day after tomorrow. In a week we expect to be in Rome, and I hope to find news of you upon arrival. How eager I am to behold those two astonishing persons who have so long troubled the peace of mind of the greatest of men. O Julie! O Claire! Nothing less than your equal could deserve to make him happy.

LETTER X

Reply from Madame d'Orbe

We were all impatiently awaiting news of you, and I need not tell you how much pleasure your letters brought to the little community: but what you will not guess as easily is that of the whole household I am perhaps the one they least delighted. They all learned that you had happily crossed the Alps; for me, it meant you were on the other side.

As for the events you related to me, we made no mention of them to the Baron, and for everyone I skipped over a few entirely unnecessary soliloquies.[148] Monsieur de Wolmar was kind enough merely to scoff at you. But Julie was unable to recall her mother's last moments without renewed

regrets and tears. She perceived only those aspects of your dream that revived her sufferings.

For my part, I will tell you, my dear Master, that it no longer surprises me to see you in continual wonderment at yourself, ever putting an end to some folly, and ever turning over a new leaf: for you have long been spending your life reproaching yourself for yesterday, and congratulating yourself for the morrow.

I confess to you that this great attempt at courage, which when you were so close to us led you to go back the way you came, does not seem so marvelous to me as it does to you. I find it more vapid than sound, and I believe that all told I would prefer less strength with a little more reason. About this manner of walking away might one ask you what it was you came for? You were ashamed to show yourself, and what you should have been ashamed of was not daring to show yourself; as if the satisfaction of seeing one's friends did not outweigh an hundredfold the petty vexation of their teasing! Shouldn't you have been only too happy to come present us your terrified face to laugh at? Well, I did not mock you then; but I mock you all the more today; although not having the pleasure of getting you nettled, I cannot laugh so heartily.

Unfortunately, there is still worse; it is that I have contracted all your terrors without being reassured like you. There is something frightening about that dream that troubles and saddens me in spite of myself. As I read your letter, I found fault with your turmoil; as I finished it, I find fault with your sense of security. There is no way for one to see why you were so shaken, and at the same time why you have become so tranquil. For what bizarre reason did you keep the saddest forebodings up until the moment when you could have destroyed them and then not wish to do so? One step, one gesture, one word, would have taken care of everything. You had taken alarm without cause, you have taken assurance likewise; but you have communicated to me the fright you no longer have, and it happens that having a single time in your life been strong, you did it at my expense. Since your fatal letter I have never been free of apprehension; I never come near Julie without trembling lest I lose her. At every moment I can see on her face the pallor of death, and this morning pressing her in my arms, I found myself in tears without knowing why. The veil! The veil!.... There is something sinister about it that troubles me every time my mind comes back to it. No, I cannot forgive you for having had the power to lift it without doing so, and I greatly fear that henceforth I shall have not a moment's contentment until I have seen you again by her side. Concede too that after talking so long about philosophy, you finally proved a philoso-

pher at just the wrong time. Ah! go on dreaming, and let your friends see you; that is better than fleeing them and being a sage.

It appears from Milord's Letter to Monsieur de Wolmar that he is seriously considering coming to settle here with us. As soon as he has decided about that, and his heart is set, come back both of you happy and for good; such is the wish of the little community, and above all that of your friend,

Claire d'Orbe

P. S. Moreover, if it is true that you heard nothing of our conversation in the Elysium, that is perhaps all the better for you; for you know I am alert enough to see people without their spying me, and mischievous enough to make sport of eavesdroppers.[149]

LETTER XI

Reply from Monsieur de Wolmar

I am writing to Milord Edward, and I speak of you at such length that all that remains for me to do in writing to you is to refer you to his letter. Yours perhaps should require me to return your civilities; but calling you into my family; treating you as a brother, as a friend, making a sister of her who was your lover; placing in your hands a father's authority over my children; entrusting to you my rights after usurping yours; these are compliments I have believed you worthy of. On your part, if you justify my conduct and my attentions, you will have praised me enough. I have tried to honor you with my esteem, honor me with your virtues. Any other eulogy must be banished between us.

Far from being surprised that you were disconcerted by a dream, I do not quite see why you reproach yourself for it. It seems to me that for a man of systems[150] one more dream is not such an important matter.

But what I would fain reproach you with is less the effect of your dream than its type, and this for a reason very different from the one you might think. A Tyrant once had a man put to death for dreaming he stabbed him.[151] Remember the reason he gave for this murder, and apply it to yourself. How is this! you are about to arbitrate your friend's fate and your mind is on your bygone love! were it not for the conversations of the previous evening, I would never forgive you that dream. Spend the day thinking about what you are about to do in Rome, and you will fantasize less at night over what took place in Vevey.

Fanchon is ill; this keeps my wife occupied and allows her no time to write to you. There is someone here who willingly takes over this duty. Fortunate young man! Everything is conspiring for your happiness: all the rewards of virtue pursue you to force you to deserve them. As for the reward for my acts of generosity[152] assign no one but yourself that responsibility; it is you alone I expect it from.

LETTER XII

To Monsieur de Wolmar

May this letter remain between you and me. May utter secrecy forever hide the errors of the most virtuous of men. What a dangerous pass I have entered! O my wise and beneficent friend! would I held all your counsel in my memory, as I hold your kindnesses in my heart! Never did I have such great need of prudence, and never did the fear of wanting it so thwart the little I have. Ah! where are your paternal ministries, where are your lessons, your insight? What shall become of me without you? In this moment of crisis, I would give all my life's expectations to have you here for a week.

I was wrong in all my conjectures; so far I have made nothing but blunders. I dreaded only the Marquise.[153] Once I had seen her, frightened at her beauty, at her deftness, I endeavored to detach from her completely her former lover's noble soul. Delighted with leading him back along the path where I saw nothing to fear, I spoke to him of Laura with the esteem and admiration she had inspired in me; in loosening his stronger attachment by using the other, I hoped eventually to break them both.

At first he lent himself to my scheme; he was even excessively obliging, and intending perhaps to punish my insistence by scaring me, he affected for Laura even more dedication than he thought he had. How does it stand today? His dedication is still the same, but he is no longer affecting anything. His heart drained by so many battles found itself in a weakened condition which she has taken advantage of. With her it would be difficult for anyone else to feign love for long, so imagine what it was like for the object of the passion that consumes her. In truth, one cannot behold this wretched woman without being touched by her air and figure; an impression of languor and dejection, of which her charming face is never free, makes her more attractive by damping the liveliness of her physiognomy, and like the sun's rays piercing through the clouds, her eyes dimmed by suffering beam more stinging sparks. Her very humiliation has all the graces of modesty: upon beholding her one takes pity on her, upon hear-

ing her one honors her; ultimately I must say to my friend's justification that I know only two men on earth who could remain close to her without risk.

He is being carried away, oh Wolmar! I see it, I feel it; I admit it to you in the bitterness of my heart. I shudder when I consider to what extent his waywardness could cause him to forget what he is and what he owes himself. I tremble lest that intrepid love of virtue, that makes him disdain public opinion, carry him to the opposite extreme, and lead him also to defy the sacred laws of decency and propriety. For Edward Bomston to make such a marriage!.... can you conceive!.... under the eyes of his friend!.... who allows it!.... who suffers it! and who owes everything to him!.... His hand will have to rip my heart out before I will let him profane it so.

And yet, what can be done? How should I behave? You know his violence. With him nothing is gained with words, and for some while his own have not been of a sort that could allay my apprehensions. I first pretended I did not understand him. I had reason to speak indirectly in general maxims: he in turn fails to understand me. If I try to touch him in a more sensible spot, he responds sententiously, and thinks he has refuted me. If I press him, he loses his temper, he adopts a tone that should be foreign to a friend, and to which friendship cannot respond. Do believe that I am being in this circumstance neither hesitant, nor timid; when doing one's duty, one is only too tempted to be proud; but here the problem is not pride, the problem is to succeed, and mistaken attempts can compromise the best means. I scarcely dare enter into any discussion with him; for I feel every day the truth of the warning you gave me, that he is a better reasoner, and that one must not inflame him by quarrelling.

He appears moreover somewhat cooled toward me. One might say I worry him. How greatly is a man so superior in every respect debased by a moment's weakness! The great, the sublime Edward is afraid of his friend, his creation, his pupil! It even seems, from a few words tossed out concerning his choice of residence if he does not marry, that he means to test my loyalty by appealing to my self-interest. He knows full well that I neither ought nor wish to leave his side. O Wolmar, I will do my duty and follow my benefactor anywhere. If I were cowardly and base, what would I gain by my perfidy? Would Julie and her worthy husband entrust their children to a traitor?

You have often said to me that small passions can never be decoyed and always get to where they are headed; but that great ones can be provided with weapons against themselves. I thought I could make use of that maxim here. Indeed, compassion, disdain of preconceptions, habit, everything contributing to Edward's behavior in this circumstance, escapes by virtue

of its pettiness and becomes almost impossible to counter. Whereas genuine love, being never devoid of generosity, always affords us thereby some leverage against it. I have tried this indirect path, and do not despair of the outcome. This expedient appears cruel; only reluctantly have I adopted it. And yet, all things considered, I think I am doing a service to Laura herself. What would she do in an estate to which she might rise, but reveal her former ignominy? But how great she can be by remaining what she is! If I know this strange woman well, she is made to enjoy her sacrifice more than the rank she is bound to reject.

If this resource fails me, I still have another on the government's behalf because of Religion; but this means must be invoked only in the last instance and failing all others: however that may be, I mean to spare none to prevent an unworthy and indecent alliance. O venerable Wolmar! I covet your esteem in every moment of my life. Whatever Edward may write to you, whatever you may hear said, remember that at whatever price it may be, so long as my heart beats in my chest, *Lauretta Pisana* will never be Lady Bomston.

If you approve my measures, this Letter requires no answer. If I am wrong, tell me what to do. But hurry, for there is not a moment to lose. I will have the address written in an unfamiliar hand. Do the same when you write back. After pondering what must be done, burn my letter and forget its contents. This is the first and only secret I will have had to hide from the two Cousins in my whole life: if I dared rely more on my own lights, you yourself would never have learned anything of this.*[154]

LETTER XIII

From Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe

The Post from Italy seemed to await only the moment of your leaving in order to arrive, as if to punish you for having delayed on its account. It is not I who made this pretty discovery; it is my husband who remarked that after having the horses bridled at eight, you put off your departure until eleven, not for the love of us, but after asking twenty times if it was ten, because that is when the post ordinarily comes.

You are caught, poor Cousin, you can no longer deny it. Despite Chail-

* To understand this letter properly as well as the third letter in Part Six, one needs to know Milord Edward's adventures; and I had originally intended to append them to this collection. Thinking better of it, I could not bring myself to spoil the simplicity of the two lovers' story with the romantic side of his. It is better to leave something for the reader to guess at.

lot's prophecy,[155] this Claire who is so crazy, or rather so wise, was unable to be so to the end; there you are in the same snare*[156] you took such pains to extricate me from, and you have not managed to preserve for yourself the same freedom you restored to me. Has my turn to laugh now come? Dear friend, it would take your charm and your graces to be able to jest like you, and lend to mockery itself the tender and touching tone of cajolery. And then, what a difference between us! How impudent it would be of me to joke about a harm of which I am the cause and which you inflicted upon yourself in order to take it from me. There is no sentiment in your heart that fails to afford mine some reason for gratitude, and in you everything right down to your weakness is the work of virtue. This is exactly what consoles and cheers me. You had to pity me and weep for my faults; but one can deride the false modesty that makes you ashamed of an attachment that is as pure as you.

Let us return to the Post from Italy, and leave moral lessons aside for a moment. It would be abusing my former prerogatives; for it is permissible to put one's audience to sleep, but not to try its patience. Well then, what did this Post, which because of me is arriving so slowly, bring? Nothing but good news about our friends' health, and in addition a fat Letter for you. Ah yes! I can already see you smiling and beginning to breathe again; once the letter has come, you can wait more patiently for what it contains.

Yet it still has its value, even though it arrived late; for it is so redolent of.... but I only want to give you news, and surely what I was going to say is not news.

With this Letter, another came from Milord Edward for my husband, and many greetings for us. This one genuinely contains news, and all the more unexpected since the first one says nothing about it. They were to leave the next day for Naples, where Milord has some business, and whence they will go to see Vesuvius..... can you conceive, my dear, what is so attractive about this sight? Once back in Rome, Claire, think, imagine.... Edward is on the verge of marrying.... not, thank Heaven, that unworthy Marquise; he notes, on the contrary, that she is very ill. Then whom?.... Laura, the amiable Laura; who.... and yet.... what a marriage!.... Our friend makes no mention of this. Immediately thereafter they will all three set out, and come here to make their final arrangements. Which ones my husband has not told me; but he is still expecting St. Preux will remain with us.

I admit that his silence worries me somewhat. I have some difficulty making sense of all that. To me these are strange situations, and games of the human heart that can scarcely be understood. How could so virtuous a

* I did not want to leave this as *lacs*, because of the Genevan pronunciation observed by Madame d'Orbe. Part VI, letter V, p. 542.

man have been taken with so durable a passion for such a wicked woman as this Marquise? How could she herself with her violent and cruel character have conceived and fomented a love so intense for a man who is so unlike her; if indeed one can honor with the name of love a fury capable of inspiring crimes? How could a young heart as generous, as tender, as disinterested as Laura's have tolerated its own early disorders? How did it extricate itself from them through that deceptive inclination that leads her sex astray, and how could love which undoes so many honest women have succeeded in creating one? Tell me, my Claire, disuniting two hearts who were in love but were not suited to each other; joining those who were suited to each other but did not get along well; bringing love to triumph over love itself; extracting happiness and virtue from the depths of vice and opprobrium; delivering his friend from a monster by creating for him, so to speak, a female companion.... a wretched one, it is true, but an amiable, even honest one, at least if, as I dare to believe, it is possible to become honest again; tell me, could the man who had accomplished all this be guilty? Can the man who had suffered it be blameworthy?

So Lady Bomston will come here? Here, my angel? What do you think of that? After all, what a phenomenon must this astonishing woman be whose education undid her, whose heart has saved her, and for whom love was the path to virtue? Who should admire her more than I who did just the reverse, and was led astray solely by my inclination, when everything conspired to lead me in the right path? I did not sink as low it is true; but did I raise myself up like her? Did I avoid as many pitfalls and make as many sacrifices? From the lowest degree of shame she was able to climb back up to the highest degree of honor; she is a hundred times more respectable than if she had never been criminal. She is sensible and virtuous: what more does she need to be like us? If there is no recovering from youthful faults, what right have I to more indulgence, before whom must I hope to find mercy, and to what honor could I pretend by refusing to honor her?

Well, Cousin, when my reason tells me this, my heart demurs, and, although I cannot explain why, it does not quite seem right to me that Edward should have made this marriage, and that his friend should have had a hand in it. O opinion, opinion! How difficult it is to shake its yoke! It always leads us to injustice: past good is erased by present evil; will past evil never be erased by any good?

I have allowed my husband to perceive my misgivings over St. Preux's conduct in this affair. He seems, I said, ashamed to mention it to my Cousin. He is incapable of cowardice, but he is weak.... too much indulgence for a friend's faults.... No, he said to me; he has done his duty; he will do it, I know that; I can say no more than that: but St. Preux is an

honest chap. I answer for him, you will be satisfied with him.... Claire, it is impossible for Wolmar to deceive me, and for him to deceive himself. Such firm assertions have made me search my conscience: I have understood that all my scruples derived merely from false delicacy, and that if I were less vain and more equitable, I would find Lady Bomston more worthy of her rank.

But let us leave Lady Bomston for a while and return to us. Do you not quite sense in reading this letter that our friends will return sooner than they were expected, and does your heart say nothing to you? Does it not now beat faster than usual, this heart too tender and too much like mine? Is it forgetting the danger of keeping such intimate company with a cherished object? Of seeing him every day? Of living under the same roof? And though my mistakes did not cost me your esteem, does my example make you fear nothing for yourself? How many fears did reason, friendship, honor inspire in you for me in our years of youth, which blind love made me scorn! Now it is my turn, my sweet friend, and to make you listen I have in addition the sad authority of experience. Listen to me then while there is still time, lest after spending half your life deploring my faults, you spend the other deploring yours. Above all, do not rely any longer upon that playful levity that guards women who have nothing to fear, and undoes those who are in danger. Claire, Claire! You once used to mock love, but that was because you did not know it; and since you had not felt its arrows, you believed you were beyond its range. Love is taking revenge, and has its turn to laugh. Learn to be wary of its insidious joy, or beware lest it cost you many tears some day. Dear friend, it is time to show you who you are; for up till now you have not seen yourself clearly; you have been wrong about your character, and unable to appraise yourself at your true value. You have depended on the things Chaillot said; because of your frolicsome vivacity she judged you not very sensible; but a heart like yours was beyond her ken. Chaillot was not made to understand you; no one on earth has known you well, save me alone. Even our friend has rather sensed than seen your full value. I have left you to your error as long as it could be useful to you; now that it would undo you it must be taken from you.

You are vivacious, and believe yourself not very sensible. Poor child, how mistaken you are! your vivacity itself proves the opposite. Is it not always over matters of sentiment that it is activated? Is it not from your heart that the graces of your playfulness come? Your mockery is a more touching sign of interest than another's compliments; you caress when you banter; you laugh, but your laughter goes to the soul; you laugh, but you provoke tears of tenderness, and I almost always see you being serious with people who are indifferent.

If you were no more than what you pretend, tell me what would bind us so strongly to each other? where would be the bond between us of unexampled friendship? by what wonder would such an attachment have sought out by preference a heart so incapable of attachment? What! she who has lived solely for her friend knows not how to love? She who was ready to relinquish her father, husband, relatives, and country to follow her[157] does not know how to place friendship above all else? And what then have I done, I who have a sensible heart? Cousin, I have let myself be loved, and I have done much, I who have a sensible heart in me, just by giving you in return a friendship as good as yours.

These contradictions have given you of your character the strangest notion that a woman as crazy as you ever conceived; that is, believing you are at once an ardent friend and a cold lover. Unable to deny the tender attachment that you deeply felt, you believed it was the only one of which you were capable. Except for your Julie, you thought nothing on earth could move you; as if naturally sensible hearts could be sensible to one object only, and as if, knowing how to love only me, you could have had even for me the right kind of love. You asked jokingly whether the soul had a sex?[158] No, my child, the soul has no sex; but its affections make distinctions between them, and you are beginning to discover that only too well. Because the first lover to come forward did not move you, you at once concluded you could not be moved; because you lacked love for your suitor, you thought you could not feel it for anyone. When he was your husband you loved him, however, and so strongly that even our intimacy suffered from it; this so insensible soul managed to find a substitute for love that was still tender enough to satisfy an honest man.

Poor Cousin! It is now for you to resolve your own doubts, and if it is true

Ch'un freddo amante è mal sicuro amico,

That a cold lover is not so sure a friend,*[159]

I greatly fear I now have one reason too many for depending on you[160]: but I must finish telling you all I think about that.

I suspect that you have loved without knowing it, much earlier than you think, or at least, that the same penchant that undid me would have seduced you if I had not preceded you. Do you imagine that so natural and tender a sentiment could take so long to arise? Do you imagine that at our age then one can with impunity get to know a winsome young man,

* This verse is the reverse of the original, and, whatever lovely Ladies may think, the author's ordering is more true and more beautiful.

or that with such conformity in all our tastes this one taste could have not been shared? No, my angel, you would have loved him, I am sure of that, if I had not loved him first. Less weak and not less sensible, you would have been more prudent than I without being happier. But what penchant could have overcome in your honest soul the horror of treason and infidelity? friendship saved you from the pitfalls of love; you henceforth saw only a friend in your friend's lover, and thus you redeemed your heart at the expense of mine.

These conjectures are not even as conjectural as you think, and if I wished to recall times that must be forgotten, I could easily identify in the interest you thought you were taking in me alone a no less intense interest in my beloved. Not daring to love him, you wanted me to; you surmised that each of us was necessary to the other's happiness, and your heart, which has not its equal on earth, cherished us both the more tenderly for it. Be sure that were it not for your own weakness you would have been less indulgent with me; but for a perfectly justified severity you would have felt guilty, calling it jealousy. You did not feel entitled to combat in me the penchant that should have been overcome, and for fear of being perfidious rather than wise, by sacrificing your happiness to ours you thought you had done enough for virtue.

My Claire, this is your story; this is how your tyrannical friendship obliges me to be grateful to you for my shame, and thank you for my mistakes. Do not think, however, that I mean to imitate you in that. I am not more disposed to follow your example than you mine, and as you have not to fear my faults, I no longer, thank Heaven, have your reasons for indulgence. What worthier use have I to make of the virtue you have restored to me than to help you preserve it?

I therefore must also tell you my opinion about your present condition. Our master's long absence has not changed your dispositions toward him. Your new-found freedom, and his return have produced a new era of which love has managed to take advantage. A new sentiment has not been born in your heart, the one that was so long hidden has merely made itself more at home. Proud of your boldness in admitting this to yourself, you hastened to tell me about it. That admission almost seemed necessary to you in order to render it completely innocent; by becoming a crime for your friend it ceased to be one for you, and perhaps you surrendered to the evil you had combatted for so many years, only the better to complete my own cure.

I have sensed all this, my dear; I have taken little alarm at a penchant that served me as a safeguard, and for which you had no reason to reproach yourself. This winter which we have spent all together in an atmos-

phere of peace and friendship has given me still more confidence, seeing that far from having lost anything of your gaiety, you seemed to have acquired even more. I have seen you tender, devoted, attentive; but straightforward in your endearments, spontaneous in your games, free of secrecy, free of ruse in all things, and in your boldest provocations the joy of innocence set everything aright.

Since our discussion in the Elysium I am no longer so satisfied with you. I find you sad and dreamy. You are as happy to be alone as with me; you have changed not your language but your tone of voice; your jests are more timid; you no longer venture to speak so often of him; one would say that you always fear he is eavesdropping, and one sees from your anxiousness that you are waiting for news of him rather than asking about it.

I tremble, good Cousin, that you may not be aware of the extent of your wounds, and that the arrow may be implanted deeper than you have appeared to fear. Take my advice, sound carefully your sick heart; ask yourself seriously, I repeat, whether, however proper one may be, one can without risk remain a long time with someone one loves, and whether the confidence that undid me is altogether without danger for you; you are both free; that is precisely what makes the opportunities more suspect. There is, in a virtuous heart, no weakness more powerful than remorse, and I agree with you that a woman is always strong enough against crime; but alas! who can prevent herself from being weak? At the same time, look at the consequences, bear in mind the effects of shame. A woman must respect herself to be respected, how can she deserve the esteem of others without having any for herself, and where can she who has fearlessly taken the first step halt herself on the road to vice?[161] That is what I would say to those women of the world for whom morality and religion are nothing, and whose only law is other people's opinions. But you, virtuous and Christian woman; you who see your duty and take it to heart; you who know and follow other rules than public judgments, your principal honor is the one your conscience renders you, and that is the one you must preserve.

Would you like to know where you are wrong in this whole affair? It is, I say it again, in blushing at an honest sentiment which you have only to declare to render it innocent*: but with all your sprightly humor, no one is as timid as you. You jest to put up a good front, and I see your poor heart all a-tremble. You behave with respect to love, which you pretend to laugh at, like those children who sing at night when they are afraid.[162] O dear

* Why does the Editor let stand the continual repetitions that fill this Letter, as well as many others? For a very simple reason; it is because he cares not a whit whether these Letters please those who will ask this question.

friend! Remember you have said a thousand times that it is false shame that leads to real shame, and virtue makes us blush only at what is evil. Is love in itself a crime? Is it not the purest as well as the sweetest of nature's inclinations? Has it not a good and praiseworthy end? Does it not flee base and abject souls? Does it not inspire great and strong souls? Does it not ennoble all their sentiments? Does it not double their being? Does it not lift them above themselves? Ah! If to be honest and proper, one has to be invulnerable to its arrows, tell me, who is left on earth for virtue? The dregs of nature, and the vilest of mortals.

What then have you done with which you can reproach yourself? Has your choice not fallen on an honorable man? Is he not free? Are you not? Does he not deserve all your esteem? Have you not all of his? Will you not be only too happy to provide for the happiness of a friend so worthy of that name, to acquit with your heart and person your cousin's old debts, and to honor, by raising it to your level, merit spurned by fortune?

I see the petty scruples that stop you. Going back on a resolution made and declared, putting a successor in the departed's place, displaying one's weakness to the public, marrying an adventurer; for base souls, never at a loss for withering epithets, will surely hit on that one. Are such then the reasons for which you would rather feel guilty for your penchant than justify it, and let your flame smoulder in your heart rather than make it legitimate? But, pray tell me, does the shame lie in marrying the man you love or in loving him without marrying him? That is the choice that remains for you to make. The honor you owe the departed is to respect his Widow enough to offer her a husband rather than a lover, and if your youth obliges you to fill his place, is it not still paying tribute to his memory to choose a man who was dear to him?

As for the inequality, I think I would be offending you if I combatted such a frivolous objection, when the question is propriety and good morals. The only dishonorable inequality I know of is that which stems from character or education. Whatever estate a man imbued with base maxims may attain, it is always shameful to join oneself with him. But a man brought up in sentiments of honor is everyone's equal, there is no rank where he is out of place. You know what your own father's opinion was when the question of me arose for our friend. His family is honest although obscure. He enjoys the public esteem, he deserves it. Withal were he the least of men, still there should be no hesitation; for it is better to derogate from nobility than from virtue, and the Coalman's wife is more respectable than the Prince's mistress.[163]

I think I divine yet another kind of embarrassment in the necessity of

being the first to speak; for as you must sense, in order for him to aspire to you, you must give him leave to do so; and one of the just vengeances of inequality is that it often costs the higher-ranked person mortifying advances. With respect to this difficulty, I forgive you for it, and I even admit that it would seem very serious to me if I did not take care to remove it: I hope you rely enough on me to believe it will be without compromising you; for my part I rely sufficiently on the outcome to assume the responsibility for it confidently; for whatever you may both have told me formerly about the difficulty of making a friend into a mistress,[164] if I know well a heart into which I have learned to read only too well, I do not believe on this occasion that the undertaking requires great skill on my part. I therefore propose that you leave me in charge of this negotiation, so that you can give in to the pleasure his return will afford you, without secrecy, without regrets, without danger, without shame. Ah Cousin! what a charm for me to join forever two hearts so made for each other, and that have so long been fused in mine. May they be fused still more, if that is possible; may you two henceforth become one for yourselves and for me. Indeed, my dear Claire, you will again serve your cousin by consummating your love, and I shall be the more sure of my own sentiments when I can no longer sort them out between you.

But, despite my reasons, should this proposal not suit you, my advice is that at whatever cost we get this dangerous man, ever redoubtable for one or the other, away from us; for, whatever happens, our children's education matters even less to us than their mothers' virtue. I leave you time to reflect on all this during your journey. We will talk about it after your return.

I choose to send you this Letter directly to Geneva, because you must have spent only one night at Lausanne and it would no longer find you there. Bring me lots of news of the little Republic.[165] From all the good things people say about that charming city, I would think you lucky to go and see it, if I could have high regard for pleasures purchased at the expense of one's friends. I have never loved luxury, and I hate it now for having taken you away from me for I know not how many years. My child, neither you nor I went to do our bridal shopping in Geneva; but however meritorious your brother, I doubt your Sister-in-law will be happier with her Flemish lace and Indian fabrics than we will in our simplicity. I charge you however, despite my resentment, with prevailing upon her to come and hold the wedding at Clarens. My father is writing to yours, and my husband to the mother of the bride to ask them to do so: here are the letters, deliver them, and support the invitation with your renewed influence; that is all I can do to keep the celebration from taking place without

me: for I declare to you that at whatever cost I do not mean to leave my family. Farewell, Cousin; a word of news from you, and let me know at least when I may expect you. This is the second day since you left, and I am no longer able to live so long without you.

P. S. While I was finishing this discontinuous letter, Mademoiselle Henriette made a great show of writing separately as well. Since I always want the children to say what they think and not what they are told to say, I have let the snoopy little creature write whatever she wished, without changing a single word. Third Letter included with mine. I of course suspect that it is not the one you were looking for out of the corner of your eye when you ferreted through the package. As for that one, save yourself the trouble of looking further for it, for you will not find it. It is addressed to Clarens; it must be read at Clarens; act in consequence.

LETTER XIV

From Henriette to her mother

So where are you, Maman? They say you are in Geneva, and that that is so far, so far away, that it would take two days of walking all day to get to you: so are you also planning to go round the world? My petit-papa left this morning for Étange; my petit-grandpa is out hunting; my petite-maman has just closed herself in to write; only aunt Pernette and aunt Fanchon are left.[166] Goodness! I don't know why it is, but since our good friend left, everyone is scattering. Maman, you started it first. We were already bored enough when you no longer had someone to pester; oh! It is even worse since you have been gone; for petite-maman is not in as good humor as when you are here either. Maman, my little hubby is fine, but he doesn't love you any more, because you didn't bounce him on your knee yesterday as you usually do. As for me, I think I would still love you a little if you came back right away, so we would not be so bored. If you want to make up with me really well, bring something for my little hubby that he will like. To make up with him, though, you will surely be clever enough to think also of what you must do. Ah goodness! if our good friend were here how he would already have guessed! my nice fan is broken to pieces; my blue dress is just a rag; my silk lace is in tatters, my lace mittens[167] are worn out. Good day, Maman; I must finish my Letter, for the petite-maman has just finished hers and is leaving her study. I think her eyes are red, but I do not dare tell her; but when she reads this she will indeed see

that I have seen it. My good Maman, how wicked you are, if you make my petite-Maman cry!

P. S. I send a hug to my grandpa, a hug to my uncles, a hug to my new aunt and her maman; I send a hug to everyone except you. Maman, you know very well what I mean; for you my arms are not that long.

End of Part Five.

Part Six

LETTER I

From Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar

Before leaving Lausanne I must write you a brief word to inform you that I have arrived here; not however as joyful as I hoped. I was looking forward with great pleasure to this little trip which has so often tempted even you; but by refusing to come along you have made it almost a bother to me; for what comfort will there be in it for me? If it is boring, the boredom will be all for me; and if it is agreeable, I will have the regret of enjoying myself without you. While I have nothing to object to your reasons, does that make you think they satisfy me? In faith, Cousin, you are quite mistaken, and that is another thing that peeves me, that I shouldn't even have the right to be peeved. Tell me, meany, aren't you ashamed always to be the one who is right, and to resist what gives your friend pleasure, leaving her not even the pleasure of grumbling? I suppose you think everything would have fallen apart if you had just run away from your husband, your household, and your youngsters for a week? You would have committed an extravagance, it is true; but it would make you a hundred times better; whereas in making it your business to be perfect, you'll no longer be good for anything, and you will just have to look for friends among the angels.

In spite of past disagreements, I could not without some emotion find myself once again amongst my family; they have received me with pleasure, or at least with many caresses. I shall not attempt to describe my brother until I have made his acquaintance. Cutting a rather fine figure, he has the starchy manner of the country he hails from. He is grave and cold; he even seems to me somewhat arrogant; I greatly fear for the little bride, lest instead of being as good a husband as ours, he play something of the Lord and master.

My father was so enchanted to see me that to embrace me he abandoned the account of a great battle the French have just won in Flanders,[1] as if to verify the prediction made by our friend's friend. What a blessing he was not there! Can you imagine the valiant Edward seeing the English

flee, and fleeing himself?.... Never, never!.... he would sooner have had himself killed a hundred times over.

But as for our friends, it has been a long while since they wrote to us. Was it not yesterday, I believe, that the Post was due to arrive? If you receive any Letters from them, I hope you will not forget my stake in them.

Farewell, Cousin, I must go. I await news of you in Geneva, where we expect to arrive tomorrow in time for dinner. Moreover, I warn you that in one way or another the wedding will not take place without you, and that if you are unwilling to come to Lausanne, I shall bring my whole crew and put Clarens to pillage, and drink the wines of the world over.[2]

LETTER II

From Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar

Wonderfully put, sister preacher! but you are counting a bit too much, I think, on the salutary effect of your sermons: without presuming to judge whether they used to put your friend to sleep, I warn you that today they do not have that effect on yours truly; and the one I received last evening, far from lulling me to sleep, deprived me of it the whole night long. Beware my Argus's commentary,[3] if he were to lay eyes on this letter! but I shall see to it that he doesn't, and I assure you that you will sooner put your hand in the fire than show it to him.

If I were to recapitulate your letter point by point,[4] I would be usurping your prerogatives; it is better for me to follow my whim; and also, to seem more modest and not make things too easy for you, I do not intend to talk first about our travellers and the Post from Italy. The remedy, should I do so, will be to rewrite my letter, and put the beginning at the end.[5] Let us talk about the would-be Lady Bomston.

I take offense at the very title. I would no sooner forgive St. Preux for letting that woman assume it than Edward for offering it to her, and you for recognizing it. Julie de Wolmar receive *Lauretta Pisana* in her house! suffer her by her side! Now my child, are you serious? What cruel charity is this? Don't you know that the air that surrounds you is mortal to infamy? Would the poor woman dare mingle her breath with yours, would she dare breathe in your proximity? She would be more uncomfortable than a possessed man at the contact of relics; a mere look from you would make her sink into the earth; your mere shadow would kill her.

I do not disdain Laura; God forbid: on the contrary, I admire and respect her all the more because such a reversal is heroic and rare. Is that suf-

ficient to justify the base comparisons with which you dare profane yourself; as if in the greatest weaknesses genuine love did not protect the person, and render honor more exacting? But I hear you, and excuse you. Distant and lowly objects now become indistinct to your sight; from your sublime heights you look down on the earth, and no longer see its unevenness. Your devout humility finds a way to take advantage even of your virtue.

Well what good does all that do? Do natural sentiments not return all the same? Does †pride put them any less to profit? In spite of yourself you feel your revulsion, you denounce it as arrogance, you would like to resist it, you impute it to opinion. Softy! and since when has the opprobrium of vice lain merely in opinion! What association do you imagine possible with a woman in whose presence chastity, honesty, virtue could hardly be mentioned without making her shed tears of shame, without reviving her sufferings, without almost compounding her repentance with insult? Take my advice, my angel, one must respect Laura and not see her. To flee her is a sign of respect that honest women owe her; with us she would have too much to suffer.

Listen. Does your heart not tell you that this marriage must not take place? Is that not to tell you that it shall not?... Our friend, you say, does not mention it in his letter?... in the letter you say he wrote to me?... and you say that this letter is very long?... and then come your husband's remarks... he is secretive, your husband!... You are a couple of rascals who are conspiring against me; but... his sentiment, moreover, was not very necessary in this matter... especially for you who have seen the letter... nor for me who have not seen it... for I am more sure of your friend, of mine, than of all philosophy.

Ah, there it's happened! Isn't it already that insistent fellow finding his way back in, goodness knows how? My word, lest he come back again, while I am on the subject of him, I must exhaust it, so I will not have to deal with it twice.

Let us not get ourselves lost in the land of illusions. If you had not been Julie, if your friend had not been your lover, I have no way of knowing what he would have been to you; I do not know what I would have been myself. All I know for certain is that if his unlucky star had sent him my way first, his poor head was done for, and, whether I am crazy or not, I would unfailingly have driven him crazy. But what does it matter what I could have been? Let's talk about what I am. The first thing I did was to love you. From our earliest years my heart merged with yours. However tender and sensible I might have been, I was no longer able to love or feel

by myself. I derived all my sentiments from you; you alone were everything to me, and I lived only to be your friend. That is what Chaillot saw; that is what she judged me by; answer me, Cousin, was she wrong?

I made of your friend my brother, as you know: my friend's lover was like my mother's son to me. It was not my reason, but my heart that made that choice. Had I been still more sensible, I would not have loved him differently. I was embracing you when I embraced your dearer half; the very warmth of my caresses was my warrant of their purity. Does a maiden treat her beloved thus? Did you yourself treat him thus? No, Julie, love for us is hesitant and timid; reserve and shame are its advances, it declares itself in its denials, and the minute it transforms its caresses into favors, it can well appreciate their cost. Friendship is generous, but love is stingy.

I admit that too close ties are always perilous at the age he and I were then; but our hearts being both absorbed with the same object, we became so accustomed to placing it between us, that unless we obliterated you we could no longer come in contact with each other. The very intimacy of which we had made such a sweet habit, that intimacy so dangerous in every other situation, was then my safeguard. Our sentiments follow from our ideas, and once they have taken on a certain bent, they have trouble changing it. We had too thoroughly adopted a certain mode to begin anew in a different one; we had already gone too far to back up. Love wants to make all its progress on its own, and does not like for friendship to shorten its way by half. Finally, as I once said, and have reason still to believe, one hardly kisses criminally the same lips one has kissed innocently.

In support of all this came the man Heaven destined to provide my life's short happiness. As you know, Cousin, he was young, handsome, honest, attentive, obliging; he did not know how to love as your friend did; but it was me whom he loved, and when one's heart is free, passion directed at us is always somewhat contagious. I therefore returned to him as much of mine as was still unclaimed, and his share was still ample enough for him not to regret his choice. With that, what had I to fear? I even admit that womanly rights combined with those of duty did prejudice yours for a while, and that taking to my new status I was at first more spouse than friend; but when I came back to you I brought you two hearts instead of one, and I have not forgotten since that I have alone remained responsible for this double debt.

What more shall I tell you, my sweet friend? At our former master's return, it was, so to speak, a new acquaintance to be made: I seemed to see him with different eyes; I seemed to feel in embracing him a thrill unknown to me until then, the more delightful this emotion was, the more fearful it made me: I took alarm as though it were a crime at a sentiment

that perhaps existed only because it was no longer criminal. I was too conscious that your lover was your lover no longer and never could be again; I was too aware that he was free and that I was free as well. You know the rest, dear Cousin, you learned of my terrors, my scruples as soon as I did myself. My inexperienced heart was so hesitant at a state so new to it that my eagerness to rejoin you made me feel guilty, as if it had not antedated that friend's return. I did not like the idea of his being precisely where I so strongly desired to be, and I think I would have suffered less to feel a cooling of that desire than to imagine that it was not entirely for your sake.

Ultimately, I rejoined you, and was almost reassured. I had felt less guilty for my weakness after confessing it to you. At your side I felt even less so; it was as if I had placed myself under your protection in my turn, and I ceased to fear for myself. I resolved, at your own advice, not to alter my conduct with him. Most assuredly greater reserve would have amounted to a sort of declaration, and those that could escape me despite myself were quite enough, without making one intentionally. I continued therefore to be playful out of shame and familiar out of modesty: but in being carried out less naturally, all that was perhaps not carried out with the same restraint. From giddy that I was, I became downright crazy, and what made me even more confident in doing so was feeling that I could do it with impunity. Whether because the example of your self-recovery gave me more strength to imitate you, or because my Julie purifies all who come near her, I found myself completely tranquil, and all that remained of my earlier emotions was a sentiment that was very tender, to be sure, but calm and peaceful, and one that asked no more of my heart than the continuation of the state I was in.

Yes, dear friend, I am tender and sensible just as you are; but in a different way. My affections are keener; yours are deeper. With more lively senses I have perhaps more means of deflecting them, and the very gaiety that costs so many others their innocence has always preserved mine. It has not always been easy, I must admit. How can one remain a widow at my age, and not sometimes feel that daytime is only half of life? But as you have said, and as you know from experience, propriety is a very good means of being proper; for with all your fine countenance, I do not believe your case differs much from mine. That is when jocularity comes to my aid and does more, perhaps, for virtue than would the grave lessons of reason. How often in the silence of the night, when there is no escape from oneself, have I fended off importunate thoughts by plotting tricks for the next day! How often have I rescued myself from the dangers of a private conversation with an extravagant witticism! You know, my dear, there is always, when one is weak, a moment when gaiety becomes serious, and that

11. Claire, Claire! Children sing at night when they are afraid.
Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

moment will not come for me. This is what I think I am feeling, and what I dare vouch to you.

After that, I freely confirm everything I told you in the Elysium about the attachment I have felt emerging, and all the happiness I have savored this winter. For that reason I surrendered all the more willingly to the charm of keeping company with the one I love, feeling that I desired nothing more. If that time had lasted forever, I would have desired no other. My gaiety was owing to contentment and not artifice. I disguised as mischievousness the pleasure of paying constant attention to him. I felt that by limiting myself to laughter I was storing up no tears.

By my faith, Cousin, I thought I perceived at times that the game did not displease him too much himself. The sly fellow was not peeved at being peeved, and he was so difficult to appease only so as to be appeased longer. In such a way I found the opportunity to say rather tender things to him while seeming to mock him; it was hard to tell who was being the more childish. One day when in your absence he was playing chess with your husband, and I was playing at shuttle-cock with Fanchon in the same room, she knew what I was up to and I was keeping an eye on our philosopher. From his humbly proud mien and the quickness of his moves, I could see that he was winning. The table was small, and the chessboard had an overhang. I waited for the right moment, and without appearing to be trying, with a backhand of the racquet I upset the checkmate. You never in all your days saw such anger; he was so furious that when I gave him the choice of a box on the ear or a kiss for my penance, he turned aside when I presented my cheek.[6] I begged his pardon; he was unyielding: had I gone to my knees he would have left me there. I ended up staging another show which made him forget the first, and we were better friends than ever.

With any other method, I would infallibly have gotten out of it less well, and on one occasion I realized that if the game had become serious, it could have been too much so. It was an evening when he was accompanying us for that so simple and touching duo of Leo's, *Vado a morir, ben mio*.[7] You were singing rather distractedly, such was not the case with me; and, as I had a hand resting on the Harpsichord, at the moment of greatest pathos when I myself was moved, he placed on that hand a kiss that I felt on my heart. I do not know much about kisses of love, but I can tell you that never did friendship, not even ours, ever give or receive such a kiss as that. Well now, my child, after such moments what becomes of a woman who goes off to dream by herself, and carries the recollection of them with her? In this case, I disrupted the music, I insisted we dance, I got the philosopher to dance, we barely supped at all, we stayed up quite late into the night, I went to bed very weary, and slept soundly.

I therefore have very good reasons for not going against my humor or changing my behavior. The moment that will make such a change necessary is so close that there is no point in anticipating. The time will come only too soon for being prudish and reserved; so long as I am still counting in my twenties, I hasten to make use of my rights; for a woman over thirty is no longer crazy but ridiculous, and your fault-finding man has the nerve to tell me I have but six months left in which to mix salad with my fingers. Patience! To repay this sarcasm I intend to mix it for him six years from now,[8] and I swear I shall make him eat it; but I digress.

If we are not masters of our sentiments, we are at least of our conduct. Doubtless, I could ask Heaven for a heart more serene; but may I on my last day lay before the Sovereign judge a life as free from guilt as mine has been this last winter! Truly, I had nothing for which to reproach myself while I was with the only man who could make me criminal. My dear, such has not been the case since he went away; as I become accustomed to thinking about him in his absence, I think about him every moment of the day, and I find his image more dangerous than his person. When he is far away, I am in love; when he is at hand, I am merely crazy; let him return, and I fear him no longer.

Regret over his absence has been compounded by anxiety over his dream. If you have ascribed all this to love, you have been mistaken; friendship had its share in my sadness. After their departure I beheld you pale and changed; at every moment I expected to see you fall ill. I am not credulous but apprehensive. I know full well that a dream does not bring about an event, but I always fear the event will come to pass as a consequence. That cursed dream left me scarcely a single night's peace, until I saw you completely recovered and your color returned. If only because my impatience contained an unwitting element of dubious self-interest, it is certain I would have given anything in the world for him to have shown himself when he backed down like an imbecile. At length my vain terror went away along with your sickly face. Your health, your appetite did more than your jokes, and I have observed you arguing so effectively at table against my frights that they have all been dispelled. To make it even better, he is coming back, and I am thoroughly charmed. His return does not alarm me, it reassures me; and as soon as we see him, I shall have no more fears either for your days or for my peace of mind. Cousin, preserve my friend for me, and be not anxious for yours[9]; I answer for her for as long as she has you.... but, oh God, what is it that still makes me anxious, and weighs on heart without my knowing why? Ah, my child, must one of us one day survive the other? Woe to her on whom so cruel a fate must fall! She will live on barely worthy of life, or be dead even before she dies.

Could you tell me on what I account I exhaust myself in stupid lamen-

tations? Away with these panicky frights that want common sense! Instead of talking about death, let's talk about marriage; that will be more entertaining. This idea occurred to your husband a long time ago, and if he had not raised it with me, it would perhaps have never occurred to me. Since then I have sometimes thought about it, and always with disdain. Fie! that ages a young widow; if I had children of a second bed, I would think myself the grandmother of those of the first. I also find it only too kind of you to dispose blithely of your friend, and to regard that arrangement as a ministration of your gracious charity. Well, let me tell you that all the reasons founded on your obliging solicitude do not equal the least of my own against a second marriage.

Let us talk seriously; I have not a soul so base as to include among these reasons the shame of reneging on a hasty commitment made to myself alone, nor the fear of being faulted for doing my duty,[10] nor the inequality of fortunes in a situation where all the honor goes to the person to whom the other is prepared to owe his[11]: but without repeating what I have told you so many times about my independent humor and my natural repugnance for the marriage yoke, I stick with one single objection, and I derive it from that sacred voice that no one on earth respects as much as you; but lift this objection, Cousin, and I give in. In all this playfulness that frightens you so[12] my conscience is easy. The memory of my husband does not make me blush; I am glad to call on it to attest my innocence, and why would I fear to do before his image anything I once did before him? Would it be the same, O Julie! if I violated the sacred engagements that united us, if I dared swear to another the everlasting love I so often swore to him, if my heart, unworthily divided, robbed his memory of what it bestowed on his successor, and was unable without offending one of them to fulfill what it owed the other? That very image that is so dear to me would give me nothing but terror and fright, it would continually come back to poison my happiness, and the memory of him, which is the joy of my life, would become its torment. How dare you speak to me of giving my husband a successor, after having sworn never to give one to your own?[13] As if the reasons you cite to me applied less to yourself in the same instance! They loved each other?[14] Worse still. With what indignation would he see a man who was dear to him usurp his rights and render his wife unfaithful! Finally, were it true that I owe nothing more to him, do I owe nothing to the dear token of his love,[15] and can I believe he would ever have accepted me, could he have foreseen that I would one day expose his only daughter to being thrown together with the children of someone else?

One word more, and I have done. Who told you all the obstacles would come from me alone? In answering for the man concerned in this engagement, have you not consulted rather your desire than your power? Even if

you were sure of his assent, would you feel no scruple in offering me a heart worn out by another passion? Do you think mine ought to be satisfied with it, and that I could be happy with a man to whom I could not provide happiness? Cousin, think better of it; though I do not insist on more love than I myself can feel, I want all the sentiments I bestow to be requited, and I am too honest a woman not to care whether I please my husband. What warrant have you then for your expectations? A certain pleasure in being together which may be the effect of friendship alone; a fleeting transport which at our age can arise from mere difference of sex; is all that enough to give them foundation? If this transport had produced some durable sentiment is it believable that he would have kept it a secret, not only from me, but from you, but from your husband who could only have received such a disclosure favorably? Has he ever breathed a word of this to anyone? Has the subject of our private conversations ever been anything but you? In yours has the subject ever been me? Can I think that if he had some secret of this sort that was hard to keep, I would never have perceived his constraint, or that no indiscretion would ever have escaped him? Finally, even since his departure, which of us does he most often mention in his letters, with which is he preoccupied in his dreams? I wonder how you can say that I am sensible and tender, and not imagine that I will say all these things to myself! But I perceive your ruses, darling. It is to grant yourself right of reprisal that you accuse me of having once spared my heart at the expense of yours. This sleight of hand does not fool me.

That is all I have to confess, Cousin. I have done it to enlighten you, and not to contradict you. It remains for me to declare my intention in this matter. You now know my inner thoughts as well as and perhaps better than I do myself; my honor, my happiness are as dear to you as to me, and in the calm of the passions, reason will make you better see where I must find the one and the other. Take therefore the responsibility for my conduct, I confide its direction entirely to you. Let us return to our natural state and exchange callings, it will be better for us both. Govern, I will be docile; it is for you to will what I must do, for me to do what you will. Keep my soul enclosed in yours, why should inseparables have two?

Well then! Now let us get back to our travellers; but I have already talked so much about the one that I dare no more talk about the other, lest a difference of style make itself felt, and the very friendship I have for the Englishman say too much in favor of the Swiss. And then, what can one say about letters one has not seen? You should at least have sent me Milord Edward's; but you dared not send it without the other one, and you did quite rightly.... you could however have done still better.... Ah long live twenty-year-old Duennas! they are more tractable than they are at thirty.[16]

Shall I at least be avenged by telling you what you have brought about through this fine reluctance? It is to make me imagine the Letter in question,.... that letter so.... a hundred times more "so" than it really is.[17] Out of spite, it amuses me to fill it with things it cannot possibly contain. Now, you see, if I am not worshipped in it, I will make you pay for all the scaling down I must do.

In truth, I do not know after all this how you dare talk to me about the Post from Italy. You prove that my mistake was not to have waited for it, but not to have waited long enough. A miserable quarter-hour more, and I would have gone to get the packet, I would have laid hands on it first, read it all at my leisure, and it would have been my turn to strut. The grapes are too green[18]; two letters are being withheld from me; but I have two others that, whatever you may think, I would surely not exchange for those, even if they contained all the *so*'s in the world. I assure you that if Henriette's does not hold its own next to yours that is simply because it is superior, and neither you nor I in our whole lives will ever write anything so pretty. And then you will pretend to treat this prodigy like an impertinent little miss! Ah, that is assuredly pure jealousy. Indeed, does one ever find you on your knees before her humbly kissing her hands one after the other? Thanks to you, she is now as modest as a virgin, and grave as a Cato; respectful to everyone, even her mother; there is nothing funny in what she says; in what she writes, perhaps. And so since I have discovered this new talent, before you can spoil her letters as well as her conversation, I intend to set up from her room to mine a Post from Italy, the packets of which will not be whisked away.

Farewell, little Cousin, you have some answers there that will teach you to respect my newfound credibility. I meant to tell you about this country and its inhabitants, but I must put an end to this volume, and then you have gotten me all confused with your fantasies, and the husband almost caused me to forget the guests.[19] As we have another five or six days to remain here and I will have the time to observe better the little I have seen, you shall lose nothing for the wait, and you may depend on a second tome before I leave.

LETTER III

From Milord Edward to Monsieur de Wolmar

No, dear Wolmar, you were not mistaken; the young man is dependable; but that is hardly true of me, and I almost paid dearly for the experience that has convinced me of it. Without him, I would myself have suc-

cumbed to the test I had set for him. You know that in order to satisfy his gratitude and fill his heart with new objects, I affected to lend this journey more importance than it really had. The only things that motivated me to undertake it, aside from what related to St. Preux, were earlier penchants to humor, and an old habit to indulge once more. The only fruit I meant to harvest from it was to bid a last farewell to my youthful attachments, and bring back a friend fully recovered.

I have indicated to you that the Villeneuve dream had left me some apprehensions. That dream made me distrust the transports of joy he had poured forth when I had announced to him that he had the option of raising your children and spending his life with you. The better to observe him in the outpourings of his heart, I had first anticipated his reservations; by announcing to him that I myself would take up residence with you, I left his friendship no other objections to make to me[20]; but new resolutions made me change my language.

He had not seen the Marquise thrice before we agreed on her account. Unfortunately for her, she decided to win him over, and only managed to expose her artifice. Ill-fated woman! What great qualities devoid of virtue! What love devoid of honor! That ardent and true love touched me, bound me to her, fostered my own; but it took on the color of her black soul, and ultimately horrified me. She was not mentioned again.

When he had seen Laura, when he got to know her heart, her beauty, her mind, and that unexampled attachment only too suited to bringing me happiness, I resolved to use her to cast a clear light on St. Preux's condition. If I marry Laura, I said to him, it is not my design to take her to London where someone might recognize her; but to places where people know how to honor virtue wherever it is found; you will carry out your assignment, and we shall not cease to keep company. If I do not marry her, it is time for me to retire. You are familiar with my house in Oxfordshire, and you will choose between raising the children of one of your friends, or accompanying the other friend in his solitude. He gave me the reply I might have expected; but it was his conduct I meant to watch. For if in order to live at Clarens he favored a marriage he ought to have disapproved of, or if in this delicate instance he preferred his friend's reputation to his own happiness, in either case the test was performed, and his heart was judged.

At first I found him such as I desired: hard set against the plan I was feigning, and armed with all the reasons that ought to prevent me from marrying Laura. I appreciated these reasons better than he did, but I was seeing her constantly, and saw that she was distressed and love-stricken. My heart completely set free from the Marquise, was captured by this assiduous relationship. I found in Laura's sentiments cause enough to in-

crease the attachment she had inspired in me. It made me ashamed to sacrifice to opinion, which I scorned, the esteem I owed to her merit; did I moreover owe nothing to the hopes I had given her, if not through my words, at least through my attentions? Not to follow through, even though I had made no promises, would have been deceitful; it was heartless to deceive her. Finally adding to my penchant a sort of duty, and more mindful of my happiness than my reputation, I came fully to love her out of reason; I resolved to press the feint as far as it could go, and even to the point of reality, if I could not otherwise extricate myself without injustice.

Meanwhile I felt my anxiety growing with respect to the young man, seeing that he did not fulfill in its full strength the role he had assumed. He opposed my views, he disapproved of the bond I wished to contract; but he ill countered my mounting inclination, and spoke to me of Laura with such praise that, while appearing to dissuade me from marrying her, he increased my penchant for her. These contradictions alarmed me. I found him not as stern as he should have been. He seemed not to dare to confront my sentiment, he softened against my resistance, he feared to anger me, he did not to my taste manifest the intrepidness in his duty that it inspires in those who love it.

Other observations increased my wariness; I learned that he was secretly meeting with Laura, I noticed signs of connivance between them. The hope of being united with the man she had so loved did not make her glad. I indeed detected the same tenderness in her eyes, but that tenderness was no longer mingled with joy when she greeted me, sadness was always dominant. Often during her heart's happiest outpourings, I would see her cast an oblique glance toward the young man, and that glance was followed by a few tears she tried to hide from me. Finally the mystery was pushed to the point that I was alarmed at it. Imagine my surprise. What could I think? Had I been suckling nothing but a viper at my breast? How far did I not dare press my suspicions and repay him his earlier injustice? Weak and wretched as we are, we are the authors of our own woes! Why complain that the wicked torment us, if in addition the good torment each other?

The effect of all this was to hasten my decision. Although I was ignorant of the bottom of this intrigue, I could see that Laura's heart was still the same, and this trial only made her dearer to me. I had in mind to talk it out with her before concluding things; but I wanted to wait until the last moment, so as to acquire on my own as much information as possible. As for him, I was resolved to convince myself, to convince him, in short to go through with it all before telling him anything or making any decision relating to him, anticipating an inevitable break, and not wishing to put a

good natural disposition and twenty years of honor in the balance with suspicions.

The Marquise was ignorant of nothing that transpired between us. She had spies in Laura's Convent, and managed to learn that a marriage was in the offing. It took no more than this to awaken her fury; she wrote me threatening letters. She did more than write; but as it was not the first time and we were on our guard, her attempts were vain. One good effect was my pleasure at seeing in this situation that St. Preux was up to putting himself at risk, and not sparing his life to save a friend's.

Succumbing to the transports of her rage, the Marquise fell ill, and never recovered. Such was the end of her torments*[21] and her crimes. I could not learn of her condition without feeling some sorrow. I sent Dr. Eswin to her; St. Preux went on my behalf; she refused to see either of them; she refused even to hear me mentioned, and hurled horrible curses at me every time she heard my name spoken. I grieved for her, and felt my wounds about to open again; reason again prevailed, but I would have been the lowest of men to envisage marriage, while a woman whom I so cherished was at death's door. St. Preux, fearing that ultimately I would not be able to resist the desire to see her, suggested we make the journey to Naples, and I agreed.

Two days after we arrived, I saw him enter my room with a stern and grave countenance, holding a Letter in his hand. I exclaimed, the Marquise is dead! Would to God! he replied coldly: it is better to have passed away than to exist for doing evil; but it is not of her that I come to speak with you; listen to me. I waited silently.

Milord, he said to me, calling me by the sacred name of friend, it was you who taught me to bear that name. I have carried out the assignment you gave me, and seeing you on the point of forgetting yourself, I have had to remind you who you are. You were able to break one chain only with another. Both were unworthy of you. If nothing more than an unequal marriage had been at stake, I would have said to you: Remember that you are an English Peer, and either renounce the world's honors, or submit to opinion. But an abject marriage!.... you!.... choose your spouse better. It is not enough that she be virtuous; she must be spotless.... The wife of Edward Bomston is not easy to find. Look what I have done.

Then he placed the letter in my hands. It was from Laura. I did not open it without emotion. *Love has prevailed*, she wrote to me; *you have wished to marry me; I am content. Your friend has dictated my duty; I fulfill it without*

* From Milord Edward's previously suppressed letter, it can be seen that he believed the souls of the wicked were obliterated at death.

regret. By dishonoring you I would have lived unhappy; by leaving you your reputation it seems to me I share in it. The sacrifice of all my happiness to such a cruel duty makes me forget the shame of my youth. Farewell; from this moment I cease to be in your power and in mine. Farewell for ever. O Edward! Do not bring despair into my retreat; harken to my last wish. Give no one else a place I have been unable to fill. There was on earth one heart made for you, and it was Laura's.

Agitation prevented me from speaking. He took advantage of my silence to tell me that after my departure she had taken the veil in the Convent where she was boarding; that the Court of Rome, informed that she was to marry a Lutheran,[22] had given orders to prevent me from seeing her again, and he confessed to me candidly that he had taken all these precautions in concert with her. I did not oppose your designs, he continued, as forcefully as I could have, fearing a return to the Marquise, and meaning to decoy that former passion by means of Laura's. When I saw you go farther than I intended, I first had recourse to reason; but having too well acquired through my own faults the right of mistrusting it, I probed Laura's heart, and finding there all the selflessness that is inseparable from genuine love, I invoked it to urge her to the sacrifice she has just made. The assurance that she was no longer the object of your contempt revived her courage and made her worthier of your esteem. She has done her duty; you must do yours.

Then coming towards me in a transport, he said to me as he pressed me to his breast: Friend, in the common lot Heaven sends us I decipher the common law it prescribes us. The reign of love is passed, may the reign of friendship begin; already my heart hears nothing but its sacred voice, knows no other bond than that which ties me to you. Choose where you wish to reside. Clarens, Oxford, London, Paris, or Rome; all of them suit me, provided we are together. Come ahead, come with me where you will; seek an asylum in whatever place it may be, I shall follow you anywhere. I solemnly swear before the living God that I shall never again until death leave your side.

I was moved. The zeal and fire of this ardent young man shone in his eyes. I forgot the Marquise and Laura. What can one regret on earth when one still has a friend? I also saw from the decision he made unhesitatingly on this occasion that he was genuinely cured and that you had not wasted your labors; finally I dared to believe, from the vow he took so wholeheartedly to remain attached to me, that he was more attached to virtue than to his former inclinations. I can therefore bring him back to you in complete confidence; yes, dear Wolmar, he is worthy of raising men, and moreover, of living in your house.

A few days later I learned of the Marquise's death; she had long been dead for me: this loss no longer had any effect on me. Up till now I had considered marriage as a debt that each person contracts upon birth toward his species, toward his country,[23] and I had resolved to marry, less out of inclination than of duty: my sentiment has changed. The obligation to marry is not common to all: it depends for each man on the estate in which fate has placed him; it is for the common people, for the artisan, for the villager, for really useful men that celibacy is illicit: for the classes that rule the others, toward which all the others constantly gravitate, and which are always only too well filled, it is permissible and even appropriate.[24] Otherwise, the State is merely depopulated because of the multiplication of subjects that are a burden to it. Men will always have enough masters, and England is more likely to want Plowmen than Peers.

Therefore I believe myself free and my own master in the station to which Heaven willed I should be born. At my age the losses my heart has sustained cannot be repaired. I devote it to cultivating what remains, and cannot collect it better than at Clarens. I therefore accept all your offers, under the conditions my fortune must prescribe, so that it will not be useless to me. After the commitment St. Preux has made, I no longer have any other means of keeping him with you than to remain with you myself, and if ever he is undesirable, I shall only need to leave. The only problem remaining concerns my trips to England; for although I no longer have any influence in Parliament, since I am a member of it I shall fulfill my duty to the end.[25] But I have a colleague and a faithful friend who can assume responsibility for my vote on current affairs. On the occasions when I believe I must be present in person our pupil can accompany me, even along with his own once they are a bit older and you are willing to entrust them to us. These trips could only be useful to them, and will not be long enough to afflict their mother greatly.

I have not shown this letter to St. Preux. Do not show all of it to your Ladies; it is best this design to test him never be known to any but you and me. Beyond that do not hold back from them anything that does honor to our worthy friend, even at my expense. Farewell, dear Wolmar. I send you the drafts for my house. Revise, alter as you wish, but have the work begun at once, if possible. I meant to dispense with the music room, for all my tastes are spent, and I no longer care about anything. I leave it in at the urging of St. Preux, who intends to have your children practice in that room. You will also receive a few books to expand your library. But what will you find that is new in books? O Wolmar, you need only to learn to read in the book of nature to become the wisest of mortals.[26]

LETTER IV
Reply

I was expecting, dear Bomston, that your long adventures would turn out as they did. It would have seemed very strange if after resisting your penchants for so long you had awaited the arrival of a supporting friend only to let them overcome you; although in truth one is often weaker when leaning on someone else than when one depends solely upon oneself. Yet I confess that I was alarmed by your last letter in which you announced your marriage to Laura as something firmly decided upon. I doubted it would come to pass despite your assurance, and if my expectation had been belied, never again in my life would I have laid eyes upon St. Preux. You both have done what I had hoped from each of you, and you have too well justified the judgment I had made of you, for me not to be enchanted to see you return to our original arrangements. Come, uncommon men that you are, come increase and share the happiness of this house. Whatever truth there may be in Believers' hope in the afterlife, I enjoy spending this one with them, and I feel that you all suit me better as you are than you would if you had the misfortune to think my way.

Moreover you know what I told you about him before you left. I had no need of your test in order to judge him; for mine had been performed,[27] and I think I know him as much as one man can know another. Besides, I have more than one reason for depending on his heart, and much better warrants of him than he has himself. Although in your renunciation of marriage he appears to wish to imitate you, perhaps you will find cause here for persuading him to change his system. I shall explain myself better after your return.

As for you, I find your distinctions about celibacy entirely novel and very subtle. I think they are even judicious for the political thinker who weighs the respective forces of the State in order to maintain equilibrium between them. But I do not know whether in terms of your principles these reasons are solid enough to dispense individuals from their duty toward nature. It would seem life is a possession one receives only on condition of passing it on, a sort of substitution[28] which must pass from generation to generation, and that anyone who had a father is obligated to become one. That was your sentiment until now, that was one of the reasons for your journey; but I know where you got this new philosophy, and I saw in Laura's note an argument to which your heart has no reply.

The Cousin-in-law has been for eight or ten days in Geneva with her

family for shopping and other business. We are expecting her return any day now. I have told my wife everything about your letter that she needed to know. We had learned from Monsieur Miol that the marriage was off; but she did not know the part St. Preux had played in this outcome. Be sure she will never learn but with the greatest joy all he will do to deserve your generosity and justify your esteem. I have shown her the drawings for your house; she finds them in very good taste; we will however make a few modifications which the site requires, and which will make your lodging more convenient; you will surely approve them. We await Claire's view before we change anything; for you know that we can't do anything without her. In the meantime I have already got men on the job, and I hope that before winter the masonry will be well along.

I thank you for your books; but I no longer read those I understand, and it is too late to learn to read those I don't. I am nonetheless less ignorant than you accuse me of being. For me the true book of nature is men's hearts, and the proof that I know how to read it lies in my friendship for you.

LETTER V

From Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar

I have many complaints, Cousin, against this place. The worst is that it makes me want to stay here. The city is charming, the inhabitants are hospitable, the manners are civil, and freedom, which I love above all else, seems to have taken refuge here. The more I study this little State,[29] the more I think it is wonderful to have a fatherland, and God preserve from evil all those who think they have one, and merely have a country![30] For my part, I feel that had I been born in this one, my soul would be entirely Roman. However I would not quite venture to say at present:

Rome n'est plus à Rome, elle est toute où je suis,[31]

for I would fear lest in your malice you might think the opposite. But why then Rome, and forever Rome?[32] Let us remain in Geneva.

I shall tell you nothing more about the country's appearance. It resembles ours, except that it has fewer mountains, more fields, and does not have Chalets nearby.*[33] Nor will I tell you anything about the government. Unless God spare you, my father will tell you at length about it: he spends the whole day long talking politics with the magistrates to his heart's

* The editor believes they have come closer.

delight, and I find him already outraged that the gazette contains so little about Geneva. You can gauge their conferences by my letters. When the men exasperate me, I steal away, and bore you only to counter my own boredom.

All I have derived from their long discussions, is considerable respect for the great good sense that prevails in this city. Seeing the mutual action and reaction of all parts of the State that keep it in balance, one cannot doubt there is more art and true talent employed in the government of this little Republic than in that of the vastest Empires, where everything is held up by its own mass, and where the reins of State can fall into the hands of a fool without preventing business from going forward. I assure you it would never be like that here. I never hear anyone telling my father about all those great ministers at the great courts without being reminded of that poor musician who so proudly pounded on our great Organ*[34] in Lausanne, and who thought he was so skilled because he made so much noise. These folk have nothing but a little spinet, but they know how to get good harmony out of it, even though it is often out of tune.[35]

Nor shall I tell you anything about... but by dint of telling you nothing, I will never be done. Let us talk about something to get it over with sooner. Genevans are of all peoples on earth the one that least hides its character, and that one gets to know most quickly. Its manners, even its vices are mixed with candor. It senses that it is naturally good, and that is enough for it not to fear revealing itself as it is. It has generosity, good sense, acumen; but it loves money too much: a flaw I attribute to its situation which makes it necessary; for the territory would not suffice to feed the inhabitants.[36]

It follows from this that Genevans scattered throughout Europe in search of riches imitate the grand airs of foreigners, and after acquiring the vices of the countries in which they have lived**[37] bring them home in triumph along with their treasures. Thus other peoples' luxury leads them to scorn their traditional simplicity; they find proud freedom ignoble; they forge for themselves fetters of silver, not as a chain, but as an ornament.[38]

Well, now! am I not again into confounded politics? I get lost in it, I drown in it, it's over my head, I don't know how to drag myself out. I hear nothing else talked about here, unless it be when my father is not with us, which happens only when it is time for the Post to arrive. It is we, my child, who extend our influence everywhere; for otherwise, discussions in this country are useful and varied, and we learn nothing good from

* What was written here was, *grande Orgue*. I point out for those Swiss and Genevans who pride themselves on speaking correctly, that the word *organ* is masculine in the singular, feminine in the plural, and both forms are used equally; but the singular is more elegant.

** Today we spare them the trouble of going to get them, we bring them to their door.

books that cannot be learned here from conversation. English manners having previously reached as far as this country, the men, still keeping somewhat more separate company from the women than in our own, contract amongst themselves a more serious tone, and generally more substantiveness in their discourse. But this advantage also has its drawback which is soon perceptible. Excessively lengthy developments all the time, arguments, exordia, some stiltedness, occasional bombast, rarely any levity, never any of that naive simplicity that expresses sentiment before thought, and makes one so aware of what it is saying. Whereas the Frenchman writes the way he speaks, these men speak the way they write, they dissertate instead of talking; one would think they are always ready to defend a thesis. They distinguish, they categorize, they treat the conversation point by point; they put the same method into what they say as into their books; they are Authors, and eternally Authors. They seem to be reading when they speak, such deference do they show for etymologies, so carefully do they sound all the letters. They pronounce the *marc* of grapes like *Marc* the man's name[39]; they say *taba-k* literally and not *taba*,[40] a *pare-sol* and not a *parasol*,[41] *avan-t-hier* and not *avanhier*,[42] *Secrétaire* and not *Segrétaire*,[43] a *lac-d'amour* one drowns in rather than being strangled by it,[44] everywhere the final *s*'s, everywhere the *r*'s of infinitives[45]; in a word their speech is always sustained, their discourses are harangues, and they gossip as if they were preaching.

The funny thing is that with this dogmatic, cold tone, they are intense, impetuous, and have very ardent passions; they would even say sentimental things rather well if they did not say it all, or if they did not speak solely to ears. But their periods, their commas are so insufferable, they depict such intense emotions so soberly, that when they are through, one is inclined to look about them for the man who can feel what they have written.

Moreover I must admit that I am more or less paid to have a good opinion of their hearts, and to find them not in bad taste. You will know in confidence that a pretty, a marriageable and, they say, very rich Monsieur honors me with his attentions, and that with rather tender words, he did not cause me to look elsewhere for the Author of the things he said. Ah! had he appeared eighteen months ago, what pleasure it would have given me to take a Sovereign as my slave, and turn the head of a magnificent Lord.[46] But at present my own is not on straight enough for the sport to entertain me much, and I sense that all my follies are going the way of my reason.

I return to this taste for reading which inclines Genevans to thinking. It extends to all estates, and in all manifests itself to advantage. The Frenchman reads a good deal; but he reads new books only, or rather he leafs through them, less to read them than to say he has read them. The Genevan reads good books only; he reads them, digests them; he does not

judge them, but he possesses them; the judgment and selection are made in Paris, the selected books are practically the only ones that are sent to Geneva. The result is that reading here is less dispersed and is done with more profit. Women in their homes* also read on their own, and their tone too is affected by it but in a different way. The pretty Ladies here are wits and coquettes[47] just as they are among us. Even the lesser women of the City take from books a more contrived chatter, and a range of phrases one is astonished to hear coming from their mouths, and even sometimes from children's. It takes all of the men's good sense, all the women's gaiety, and all the wit they have in common, not to find the former a bit pedantic and the latter a bit precious.

Yesterday opposite my window two workers' daughters, very pretty, were chatting in front of their shop in a manner playful enough to arouse my curiosity. I lent an ear, and I heard one of the two suggest with a laugh that they write their journal. Yes, the other instantly replied; the journal every morning, and the commentary every evening. What say you of this, Cousin? I do not know whether that is the tone of tradesmen's daughters, but I know it takes an amazing schedule to extract from the course of a day nothing more than the commentary on one's journal. Assuredly the little person had read the adventures of the thousand and one nights![48]

Despite this fairly stiff style, Genevan women are nonetheless always lively and saucy, and as many great passions are to be found here as in any city on earth. In the simplicity of their adornment they display grace and taste; they do likewise in their conversation, in their manners; just as the men are less gallant than tender, the women are less coquettish than sensible, and this sensibility lends to even the most honest an agreeable and subtle cast of mind that speaks to the heart, and derives from it all its subtlety. As long as the Genevan women are Genevan, they will be the most amiable women in Europe; but soon they will want to be Frenchwomen, and then the French women will be better than they.

Thus all declines with morals. The best taste depends on virtue itself; it disappears when it does, and gives way to a factitious and stiff taste that is nothing but fashion's doing. True wit is nearly in the same situation. Is it not the modesty of our sex that obliges us to call on skill to spurn men's provocations, and if they need art to make us listen, do we need any less to know not to listen to them? Is it not they who loosen our wits and tongues, who make us quicker to riposte,**[49] and force us to mock them? For after all, say what you will, a certain malicious and mocking coquetry

* It will be remembered that this Letter is of ancient date, and I fear that may be too perceptible.

** It should have been *risposte*, from the Italian *risposta*. However *ripost* is also said, and I leave it in. At worst it is just one more mistake.

unnerves suitors even better than silence or scorn. What a pleasure to see a handsome Céladon[50] completely unsettled, becoming tongue-tied and flabbergasted and confused at every rejoinder, to surround oneself against him with darts less burning but sharper than those of love, riddling him with icy stabs, that sting from the cold! Yourself who act all spontaneous, do you think your naive and tender manners, your timid and gentle air, conceal less ruse and skill than all my whims? In faith, my Sweet, if we were to tally all the swains each of us has taunted, I doubt very much that with your hypocritical mien, you would be the loser! I cannot help still laughing when I remember that poor Conflans, who came all furious to blame me because you loved him too much. She is so affectionate, he would say, that I don't know what I can complain about: there is such reason in what she says to me that I am ashamed at my want of it in her presence, and she is so much my friend that I dare not be her lover.

I don't believe there are anywhere on earth closer spouses and more harmonious couples than in this city, home life is agreeable and easy; here you find obliging husbands and wives who are almost Julies. Your system is very well confirmed here. The two sexes gain in every way by assuming separate labors and entertainments that prevent them from tiring of each other, and cause them to meet more pleasurably. Thus the sensuality of the sage is made more keen; abstaining the better to enjoy, that is your philosophy; it is the epicureanism of reason.[51]

Unfortunately this traditional modesty is beginning to decline. People draw closer together, and hearts grow further apart. Here as in our country everything is admixed with good and bad; but in different proportions. The Genevan draws his virtues from himself, his vices come from elsewhere. Not only does he travel much, but he effortlessly adopts the customs and manners of other peoples; he speaks all languages with facility; he easily adopts their various accents, although he himself has a very noticeable drawl, especially among the women who travel less. More humble because of its small size than proud of its freedom, he acts ashamed of his fatherland when he is among foreign nations; he hastens as it were to become naturalized in his country of residence, as if to make others forget his own; his reputation for greediness may possibly contribute to this guilty shame. It would be better, no doubt, to remove through unselfishness the opprobrium attached to the Genevan name than to abase it further by being reluctant to bear it: but the Genevan scorns it, even while helping to make it worthy of respect, and it is even more wrong of him not to let his merit do credit to his country.

However greedy he might be, he is never found seeking his fortune by servile and base means; he does not like to attach himself to the Great and

grovel with the Courtiers: personal slavery[52] is no less odious to him than civil slavery. Pliant and sociable like Alcibiades, he has just as little tolerance for servitude, and when he adapts to others' customs, he imitates them without subjecting himself to them. Commerce being of all means of enrichment that which is most compatible with freedom, is also the one Genevans prefer. They are almost all merchants or bankers, and this great object of their desires often leads them to bury rare talents that nature showered on them. This brings me back to the beginning of my Letter. They have genius and courage, they are alert and perceptive, nothing honest or great is beyond their abilities. But more enamored of money than glory, to live in abundance they die in obscurity, and they leave to their children no other example than the love of the treasures they have acquired for their sake.[53]

I have all of this from the Genevans themselves; for they speak about themselves quite impartially. For my part, I do not know how they behave elsewhere, but I find them affable at home, and I know but one way to leave Geneva without regret. What is that way, Cousin? Oh! goodness, don't put on your humble look; if you say you haven't already guessed it, you lie. It's the day after tomorrow that the joyous gang sets forth on a pretty Brigantine[54] festively fitted out; for we have chosen to go by water because of the season, and in order to stay all together. We expect to spend that night at Morges, the next at Lausanne* for the ceremony, and the next day.... you hear me.[55] When you see pennants flapping, banners flying in the distance, when you hear the cannon roar; run madly about the house crying to arms! to arms! The enemy is coming! the enemy is coming!

P. S. Although the distribution of lodgings is incontestably a prerogative of my office, I am willing on this occasion to relinquish it. I insist only that my Father be housed at Milord Edward's because of the geographic maps, and that they be extended to cover all the walls from floor to ceiling.

LETTER VI

From Madame de Wolmar

What a delightful sentiment it gives me to begin this letter! This is the first time in my life I have been able to write you without fear and without shame.[56] I pride myself on the friendship that joins us as a reversal without example. Great passions can be stifled; rarely can they be purified. To for-

* How can this be? Lausanne is not on the lakeside; from the port to the city there is a half-league of very poor road; besides this is assuming that none of these neat arrangements will be upset by wind.

get someone we cherished when honor so dictates, such is the effort of an honest and ordinary soul; but after what we have been, to be what we are today, this is the true triumph of virtue. The cause that puts an end to love may be a vice, that which turns a tender love into a friendship no less fervent can hardly be equivocal.

Would we ever have made such progress through our own strength? Never, never my good friend, it was rash even to attempt it. To flee each other was for us the first law of duty, which nothing would have allowed us to violate. We would always have kept our esteem for each other, no doubt; but we would have ceased to see each other, to write to each other; we would have attempted to avoid thinking about each other, and the greatest honor each of us could render the other was to break off all contact between us.

Now see, instead of that, what our present situation is. Is there on earth a more agreeable one, and do we not savor a thousand times a day the reward for the struggles it has cost us? To see each other, to love each other, to feel it, to congratulate oneself for it, to spend our days together in fraternal intimacy and in the peace of innocence, to be occupied with each other, think about each other without remorse, speak of each other without blushing, and take pride in one's own eyes in the same attachment that for so long one had to feel guilt over; such is the point we have reached. O friend! how much honorable ground we already have covered! Let us dare to glory in it so we will know how to hold our course, and complete it as we have begun.

To whom do we owe a happiness so rare? You know. I have seen how your sensible heart, full of the kindnesses of the most excellent of men, enjoys taking them in; and how could they be onerous to you and to me? They impose on us no new duties, they merely make dearer to us those we already held so sacred. The only means of recognizing his ministries is to prove worthy of them, and their whole recompense lies in their success. Let us limit the outpouring of our zeal to that. Let us repay with our virtues those of our benefactor; that is all we owe him. He has done enough for us and for himself if he has restored us to ourselves. Absent or present, living or dead, we shall everywhere bear a witness that will be lost on none of us three.

I was thinking these things to myself when my husband was intending for you his children's education. When Milord Edward announced to me his and your imminent return, these same reflections came back and still others I must impart to you while there is still time.

This has to do not with me but with you; I think I have more right to give you advice now that it is completely disinterested and that, its objec-

tive no longer being my security, it relates entirely to you. You cannot doubt my affectionate friendship, and I have acquired only too much experience to make my counsel worth heeding.

Allow me to offer you the tableau of the situation you are going to find yourself in, so that you may yourself examine whether it contains anything that ought to frighten you. O good young man! If you love virtue, listen with a chaste ear to your friend's advice. She ventures trembling onto a topic she would rather suppress; but how can she suppress it without betraying you? Will there be time to perceive the objects you should fear once they have led you astray? No, my friend, I am the only person on earth intimate enough with you to set them before you. Have I not the right to talk to you when necessary like a sister, like a mother? Ah! if the lessons of an honest heart were capable of tarnishing yours, I would long since have had no more to give you.

Your career, you say, is over. But admit that it is over before your time. Love is dead; the senses survive it, and their delirium is all the more to be feared that, the only sentiment that bounded it no longer existing, everything is an occasion for lapse to him who is no longer attached to anyone. An ardent and sensible man, young and unmarried, intends to be continent and chaste; he knows, he feels, as he has said a thousand times, that the strength of soul that produces all virtues depends upon the purity that fosters them all. Since love preserved him from bad morals in his youth, he expects reason so to preserve him at all times; he knows of a reward for painful duties that compensates for their rigor, and if mastering oneself comes at the cost of struggle, will he do less today for the God he worships than he did for the mistress he once served? Such are, it seems to me, the maxims of your moral system; they are also the rules of your conduct; for you have always despised those who, satisfied with appearances, speak otherwise than they act, and heap on others heavy burdens with which they themselves want nothing to do.

What sort of life has this wise man chosen in order to follow the laws he prescribes for himself? Even less philosophical than virtuous and Christian, he has surely not taken his pride as his guide: he knows that man is more free to avoid temptations than to overcome them, and that what matters is not to repress stirred-up passions, but to prevent them from being aroused. Does he then avoid dangerous opportunities? Does he flee the creatures who might arouse his emotions? Does he make humble mistrust of himself into the safeguard of his virtue? Quite the contrary; he does not hesitate to offer himself for the most reckless combats. At thirty he is going to sequester himself with women of his own age, one of whom was too dear to him for such a dangerous memory ever to be able to fade

away, another of whom lives on an intimate footing with him, and a third of whom is still attached to him through the rights which favors exert over grateful souls.[57] He is going to expose himself to everything that can revive in him ill-extinguished passions; he is going to ensnare himself in the traps he should fear the most. There is no aspect of his situation that should not make him distrust his strength, and none that would not disgrace him forever should he have a moment's weakness. Where then is that great strength of soul to which he so dares entrust himself? What has it done so far to assure him about the future? Did it pluck him from the colonel's house in Paris? Is it what dictated to him last summer the Scene at Meillerie? Did it quite save him last winter from the charms of another object, and this spring from the terrors of a dream? Has he for its sake mastered himself a single time, so as to hope he can do so every time? He knows, when duty requires it, how to combat a friend's passions; but his own?.... Alas, based on the better half of his life, how modestly he ought to think about the other half!

One can bear a violent state when it is temporary. Six months, a year are nothing; one foresees an end to it and takes courage. But when that state must last forever, where is the man who can bear it? Where is the man who can triumph over himself until death? O my friend! if life is short for pleasure, how long it is for virtue! One must be constantly on one's guard. The moment of enjoyment passes and never returns; the moment of wrongdoing passes and returns continually. A moment's lapse, and all is lost. Is it in this frightening state that one can live out peaceful days, and do not even those one has rescued from peril provide a reason not to expose the rest?

How many opportunities can again arise, as dangerous as those from which you have escaped, and what is worse, no less unforeseen! Do you think the monuments to be feared exist only at Meillerie?[58] They exist wherever we are; for we carry them inside us. Ah! you know too well that a soul that is moved involves all creation in its passion, and that even after its cure, every object in nature reminds us of what we once felt when we beheld it. I believe nonetheless, yes I dare to believe, that those perils will never return, and my heart answers to me for yours. But just because it is above a dastardly act, is this vulnerable heart of yours above a weak one, and am I the only woman here it will perhaps find it hard to respect? Remember, St. Preux, that all those I hold dear must be covered by the same respect you owe to me; remember that you will constantly have to suffer innocently the innocent games of a charming woman; remember the everlasting scorn you would have deserved if ever your heart dared forget itself for a moment, and profane what it must honor for so many reasons.

I grant that duty, faith, old friendship may restrain you; that the obsta-

cle raised by virtue will rid you of a vain hope, and that out of reason at least you will stifle fruitless wishes: for all that, will you be delivered from the empire of the senses, and the pitfalls of the imagination? Obliged to respect both Claire and me and to put our sex out of mind, you will perceive it in our women servants, and in stooping you will think yourself justified: but will you be less guilty in fact, and does the difference in station thus change the nature of the offenses? On the contrary you will degrade yourself to the extent that the means of success are less honest. What means! What, you?.... Ah! perish the contemptible man who pays money for a heart, and turns love into something mercenary! He it is who covers the earth with the crimes committed out of debauchery. How would she who allows herself once to be bought not be always for sale? And in the degradation into which she soon falls, who is the author of her misery, the brute who manhandles her in a house of ill repute, or the seducer who drags her there, the first to put a price on her favors?[59]

Shall I dare add another consideration that will move you, if I be not mistaken? You have seen what precautions I have taken to establish order and good morals here; here modesty and peace prevail, everything bespeaks happiness and innocence. My friend, remember who you are, who I am, what we were, what we are, what we must be. Shall I one day have to say, regretting my wasted efforts: the disorder in my house is his doing?[60]

Let us be perfectly clear, if we have to, and sacrifice modesty itself to the genuine love of virtue. Man is not made for celibacy, and it is very unlikely that a state so contrary to nature will fail to lead to some public or hidden disorder. How can one forever escape from the enemy one constantly carries within? Look at those rash men in other countries who take a vow not to be men.[61] To punish them for tempting God, God abandons them; they say they are holy and they are dishonest; their feigned continence is mere defilement, and because they have disdained humanity, they debase themselves beneath it. I understand that it takes little effort to be strict about laws one abides by only in appearance*; but he who wishes to be sincerely virtuous feels sufficiently burdened by the duties of man without imposing on himself additional ones. Such, dear St. Preux, is the Christian's genuine humility; it is to find his task always beyond his strength, far from having the arrogance to redouble it. Apply this rule to yourself, and you will sense that a situation that should merely alarm another man must for

* Some men are continent without merit, others are continent out of virtue, and I do not doubt that numerous Catholic Priests are in this latter category; but to impose celibacy on such a large body as the Clergy of the Roman Church is not so much to forbid their having wives as to require them to content themselves with other men's. I am surprised that in any country where there is still some respect for good morals, laws and magistrates should tolerate such a scandalous vow.

a thousand reasons make you tremble. The less you fear, the more there is for you to fear, and if you are not frightened by your duties, do not hope to fulfill them.

Such are the dangers that await you here. Reflect on them while there is still time. I know that you will never deliberately expose yourself to wrongdoing, and the only wrong I fear from you is the one you have failed to foresee. I therefore do not tell you to be guided by my reasons, but to weigh them. Find whatever reply to them satisfies you and I will be satisfied with it; dare to rely on yourself, and I will rely on you. Say to me, I am an angel,[62] and I will welcome you with open arms.

What! forever privations and pains! forever cruel duties to fulfill! forever fleeing the people we hold dear! No, my gentle friend. Happy she who in her own lifetime can offer virtue a reward! I see one that is worthy of a man who knew how to struggle and suffer for virtue. If I have not overestimated my influence, this reward I venture to reserve for you will acquit all that my heart still owes to yours, and you will have more than if Heaven had blessed our earliest inclinations. Unable to make you an angel yourself, I mean to offer you one to guard your soul, purify it, revive it, and under whose auspices you might live with us in the peace of the celestial abode. You will, I think, have little difficulty guessing who I mean; I mean the one who is already fairly well established in the heart she is one day to fill, if my plan succeeds.

I see all the problems this plan entails but they do not discourage me; for it is an honest one. I know all the sway I hold over my cousin and have no fear of abusing it if I exert it in your favor. But her resolutions are known to you, and before I shake them I must be assured of your inclinations, so that in exhorting her to allow you to aspire to her hand, I can answer for you and your sentiments; for if the inequality that fate placed between the two of you denies you the right to propose this yourself, still less does it allow you to be granted that right without it being clear what use you may make of it.[63]

I know how tactful you are, and if you have objections to address to me, I know they will be much more on her account than on your own. Leave aside these vain scruples. Will you be more jealous than I of my cousin's honor? No, however dear you may be to me, do not fear lest I prefer your interests to her reputation. But however high a value I place on the esteem of reasonable people, I scorn just as much the rash judgments of the crowd, which allows itself to be dazzled by false glitter, and sees nothing of what is honest. Were the difference an hundred times greater, there is no station which talents and morals are not entitled to attain, and

by what right would a woman dare disdain as her husband someone she is proud to claim as her friend? You know what principles she and I both have on that score. False shame, and the fear of censure inspire more bad deeds than good ones, and virtue can only blush at what is bad.

With respect to you, the pride I have sometimes observed in you could hardly be more out of place than in this situation, and it would be ingratitude for you to fear further generosity from her. Besides, however choosy you may be, concede that it is more pleasant and more seemly to owe your fortune to your wife than to your friend; for you become the protector of the former and the protégé of the latter, and whatever people say, an honorable man will never have a better friend than his wife.

Now should there remain deep in your soul some reluctance to take on new commitments, you cannot too quickly suppress it for your honor and my peace of mind; for I will never be content with you and with myself until you are in fact such as you ought to be, and take to heart the duties you have to fulfill. Well, my friend! I should fear this reluctance less than an alacrity too germane to your former penchants. What do I not do to acquit myself toward you? I keep to more than I had promised. Am I not giving you Julie at the same time? Will you not have the better part of myself, and to the other will you not be all the dearer? How delightful then for me to give in without constraint to my attachment for you! Yes, devote to her the faith you swore to me[64]; may your heart fulfill with her all the commitments it made with me: may it repay to her if possible all you still owe to mine. O St. Preux! I transfer this former debt to her. Remember that it is not an easy one to pay.

Such, my friend, is the means I conceive to reunite us without danger, by giving you the same place in our family that you occupy in our hearts. In the dear and sacred bond that will unite us all, we shall henceforth be simply sisters and brothers to each other; you will no longer be your own enemy nor ours: the tenderest sentiments having attained legitimacy will be dangerous no longer; when we no longer have to stifle them there will no longer be cause to fear them. Far from resisting such charming sentiments, we will make of them both our duties and our pleasures; it is then that we shall all love each other more perfectly, and savor in genuine combination the charms of friendship, love, and innocence. Should Heaven in the function you are undertaking reward you for the care you take with our children with the happiness of being a father, then you will know for yourself the value of what you have done for us. Sated with the true blessings of mankind, you will learn to bear with pleasure the light burden of a life useful to those close to you; you will sense, finally, what the vain wis-

dom of the wicked has never been able to believe: that there is a happiness reserved in this lifetime solely to friends of virtue.

Take time to reflect on the match I am proposing to you; not to decide whether it suits you, on that score I have no need of your reply, but whether it suits Madame d'Orbe, and whether you can make her happy, as she must you. You know how she has fulfilled her duties in all the stations of her sex; by what she is you may ascertain what she is entitled to expect. She loves like Julie, she must be loved like her. If you feel you can be deserving of her, speak; my friendship will undertake the rest and expects the most of hers: but if I have hoped too much from you, at least you are an honorable man, and you know her scruples; you would want no part of a happiness that would come at the cost of hers; may your heart be worthy of her, or let it never be offered her.

Once more, consider it carefully. Weigh your answer before you make it. When life's fate is at stake, prudence does not permit one to decide lightly; but any light deliberation is a crime when the soul's destiny and the choice of virtue are at stake. Fortify your soul, O my good friend, with all the help wisdom can provide. Should false shame prevent me from reminding you of what is most crucial? You have Religion; but I am afraid lest you not draw from it all the advantage it can offer in the conduct of life, and lest philosophical arrogance disdain the simplicity of the Christian. I have found that you hold maxims about prayer to which I could never subscribe. According to you, this act of humility is fruitless for us, and God, having in the form of conscience given us everything that can incline us to good, then abandons us to ourselves and lets our freedom play.[65] That is not, as you know, the doctrine of St. Paul[66] nor the one we profess in our Church. We are free, it is true, but we are ignorant, weak, inclined to evil,[67] and whence would come our understanding and strength, if not from him who is its source, and why would we obtain them if we do not deign to ask for them? Take care, my friend, lest human pride mingle with the sublime notions you conceive of the great Being, base notions having to do with man, as though the means that relieve our weakness were compatible with divine power, and it like us required art to generalize things, in order to deal with them more easily. To listen to you, it seems as though it were a problem for the divinity to watch over every individual; you fear lest it tire from divided and continual attention, and you find it much more admirable that it do everything by general laws, no doubt because they cost it less attention. O great Philosophers, how grateful God must be to you for thus supplying him with convenient methods, and facilitating his work!

Why ask him for anything, you go on to say, does he not know all our

needs? Is he not our Father in order to see to them? Do we know better than he what we require, and do we desire our happiness more genuinely than he does himself? Dear St. Preux, what vain sophisms! The greatest of our needs, the only one we can see to, is that of feeling our needs, and the first step if we are to emerge from our misery is to be aware of it. Let us be humble so that we may be virtuous; let us see our weakness, and we shall be strong. Thus are justice and clemency reconciled; thus do grace and freedom together reign. Slaves through our weakness, we are free through prayer; for it is in our power to ask and obtain the strength which it is not in our power to acquire by ourselves.

Learn therefore not always to take counsel with yourself alone at difficult moments, but with him who combines power with prudence, and is able to make the most of the choice he makes us prefer. The great flaw in human wisdom, even in the kind that has only virtue as its object, is an excess of confidence which makes us gauge the future by the present, and a whole lifetime by an instant. We feel steady for a moment and assume we will never be shaken. Filled with a pride which experience daily confounds, we believe we no longer have to fear a pitfall we have once avoided. The modest language of valiance is, on one particular occasion I was brave; but he who says: I am brave, knows not what he will be tomorrow, and considering as his a valor he did not himself earn, he deserves to lose it when it comes time to use it.

How ridiculous all our schemes must be, how foolish all our reasonings, before the Being for whom times have no succession nor places distance! We count for nothing what is far from us, we see only what touches us: if we but change locations our judgments will be completely the opposite, and will be no better founded. We posit the future based on what suits us today, without knowing whether it will suit us tomorrow; we think of ourselves as being always the same, and we change every day. Who knows whether we shall love what we now love, whether we shall want what we now want, whether we shall be what we now are, whether foreign objects and the alterations of our bodies will not have greatly modified our souls, and whether we shall not find our misery in what we have contrived for our happiness? Show me the rule of human wisdom, and I shall take it as a guide. But if its best lesson is to teach us to distrust it, let us return to the one that does not deceive and do what it inspires us to do. I ask that rule to illuminate my advice, ask it to illuminate your determinations. Whatever choice you settle on, you will want only what is good and honest; I know that full well. But that is still not enough; one must desire what will forever be so; and of that neither you nor I are judge.

LETTER VII
Reply

Julie! a letter from you!.... after seven years of silence.... yes it is she; I see it, I feel it: could my eyes mistake a hand my heart cannot forget? What? you remember my name? you still know how to write it?.... as you put this name to paper* did your hand not tremble?.... I extravagate, and it is your fault. The shape, the fold, the seal, the address, everything in this letter recalls others too different. The heart and the hand seem to contradict each other. Ah! did you have to use the same handwriting to set down other sentiments?

You will find, perhaps, that my remembering your earlier letters so strongly more than justifies the most recent one. You are mistaken. I know what I am about; I am no longer the same, or you are no longer the same; and what proves it to me is that except for the charms and the goodness, everything I rediscover in you that I found there before is a new cause for surprise. This observation answers your fears in advance. I do not rely on my strength, but on the sentiment that dispenses me from having to invoke it. Impressed with all that I must honor in her whom I have ceased to worship, I know to what height of respect my former homage must rise. Imbued with the most tender gratitude, I love you as much as ever, it is true; but what attaches me to you most is the return of my reason. It presents you to me such as you are; it serves you better even than love. No, had I remained criminal you would not be so dear to me.

Since I ceased deceiving myself and the perspicacious Wolmar enlightened me as to my true sentiments I have better learned to know myself, and I am less alarmed at my weakness. Though it may abuse my imagination, though I may still cherish this error, it is enough for my peace of mind that it is no longer capable of offending you, and the illusion that leads me astray in pursuit of it saves me from a real danger.

O Julie! some impressions are everlasting; neither time nor care can erase them. The wound heals, but the mark remains, and this mark is an honorable seal that protects the heart from another blow. Inconstancy and love are incompatible: the lover who changes is not changing; he is beginning or ceasing to love. For my part, I have ceased; but while ceasing to be yours, I have remained under your protection. I no longer fear you; but you keep me from fearing somebody else. No, Julie, no, respectable

* We have stated that *St. Preux* was a contrived name. The letter was perhaps addressed to the true one.

woman, you will never see in me anything but the friend of your person and the lover of your virtues: but our love, our first and only love will never leave my heart. The flower of my years will never wither in my memory. Were I to live whole centuries, the sweet time of my youth can neither be reborn for me, nor fade from my memory. It matters not that we are no longer the same, I cannot forget what we once were. But let us speak of your Cousin.

Dear Friend, I must confess: from the time I no longer dared look upon your charms, I started to become more aware of hers. What eyes can forever wander from beauties to other beauties without ever settling on any of them? Mine have beheld her again with perhaps too much pleasure, and in the time since I left, her features, already engraven in my heart, make a deeper impression there. The sanctuary is closed, but her image is in the temple.[68] Little by little I am becoming with respect to her what I would have been if I had never seen you, and it was you alone who could make me feel the difference between what she inspires in me and love. The senses, free from that terrible passion, join with the sweet sentiment of friendship. For all that, does it become love? Julie, ah what a difference! Where is the enthusiasm? where is the idolatry? Where are those divine distractions of reason, more brilliant, more sublime, more powerful, a hundred times better than reason itself? A passing flame sets me afire, a moment's delirium seizes me, troubles me, and disappears. I rediscover in her and me two friends who love each other tenderly and tell one another so. But do two lovers love each other? No; *you* and *I* are words banished from their language; there are no longer two, they are one.

Am I then indeed at ease? How can I be? She is charming, she is your friend and mine: gratitude attaches me to her; she enters into my most blissful memories; what claims on a sensible soul, and how does one separate out a more tender sentiment from so many so well-deserved sentiments! Alas! it is written that between her and you, I shall never have a moment's peace!

Women, women! dear and ominous creatures, whom nature arrayed for our torment, who punish when we defy you, who pursue when we fear you, whose hatred and love are equally noxious, and whom we can neither seek out nor flee with impunity! Beauty, charm, attraction, sympathy! being or inconceivable phantasm, abyss of sufferings and delights! beauty, more terrible to mortals than the element into which thou wert born,[69] woe to him who surrenders to thy deceitful calm! It is thou that gatherest the tempests that torment humankind. O Julie! O Claire! how dearly do you make me pay for this cruel friendship you dare vaunt before me!.... I have lived amidst the storm, and it was always you two who provoked it;

but what divergent agitations you have made my heart experience! Those of Lake Geneva are not more like the vast ocean's swells. The former has nothing but quick, short waves whose perpetual edge agitates, moves, sometimes submerges, without ever forming a long fetch.[70] But on the seemingly calm sea, you feel yourself being lifted, carried gently and far by a slow and almost imperceptible swell; you think you have not left home, and you arrive at the ends of the earth.

Such is the difference in the effect on me of your charms and hers. That first, that only love which determined my life's destiny and which nothing could overcome but itself, had come into existence without my noticing; it carried me along while I still was unaware of it: I got lost without supposing I was off course. While the wind lasted I was in Heaven or in the abyss; the calm returns, I no longer know where I am. By her side, on the contrary, I can see, I can feel my emotion, and I imagine it stronger than it is; I experience passing transports that are without sequel, I let myself get carried away for an instant and am tranquil the next: in vain do the depths torment the vessel, the wind does not fill its sails; content with her charms, my heart does not lend them its illusion; she is lovelier to my eyes than to my imagination, and I am more apprehensive when she is nearby than when she is far away; this is almost the opposite effect from the one I receive from you, and I constantly experienced them in turn at Clarens.

Since my departure, it is true that I sometimes see her more irresistibly before me. Unfortunately, it is difficult for me to see her alone. I see her after all, and that is quite enough; she has left me not love, but disquiet.

This is a faithful account of what I am for each of you. All the rest of your sex now is nothing to me; my long sufferings have caused me to put it out of mind;

> *Et fornito il mio tempo a mezzo gli anni.*[71]
>
> And my time is finished in the midst of my years.

Unhappiness has stood me in stead of strength to overcome nature and triumph over temptations. One has few desires when one is suffering, and you have taught me to stifle them by resisting them. A great unhappy passion is a great means of wisdom. My heart has become, so to speak, the organ of all my needs; I have none at all when it is tranquil. May both of you leave it in peace, and it will henceforth be in peace forever.

In this situation what have I to fear from myself, and by what cruel precaution do you wish to deprive me of my happiness so as not to expose me to losing it? How capricious to have made me struggle and overcome, only to deprive me of the prize after the victory! Is it not you who find fault with affronting a danger for no reason? Why did you call me to your

side if there was such risk, or why banish me when I am worthy of remaining there? Should you have let your husband take such trouble to no purpose? Why did you not make him give up on ministries you were determined to render useless! Why did you not say to him: Leave him at the ends of the earth, for in any case that is where I mean to remand him? Alas! the more you fear for me, the more you should hasten to recall me. No, the danger is not at your side, but in your absence, and I fear you only where you are not. When that fearsome Julie pursues me, I take refuge with Madame de Wolmar and I am at peace; whither shall I flee if that sanctuary is denied me? All times, all places far from her are dangerous for me; everywhere I find Claire or Julie. In the past, in the present, the one and the other stir me up in turns; thus my imagination forever troubled is calmed only by seeing you, and only with you am I safe from myself. How can I explain to you the change I experience when I approach you? You still exert the same sway but its effect is quite the opposite; while repressing the transports you used to cause, this sway is still stronger, still more sublime; peace, serenity replace the disquiet of the passions; still modelled on yours, my heart loved like yours, and becomes peaceful as yours does. But this transitory peace of mind is but a truce, and however much I raise myself toward you in your presence, I fall back into myself once I leave your side. Julie, in truth I think I have two souls, of which the good one lies in trust in your hands. Ah, would you separate me from it?

But the errors of the senses alarm you? You fear the remains of a youth worn out by woes? you fear for the young persons who are under your protection? You fear from me what the wise Wolmar has not feared! O God! How humiliating to me are all these frights! Do you then think less of your friend than of the least of your servants? I can forgive you for thinking ill of me, but never for failing to render to yourself the honor you owe yourself. No, no, the flames with which I have burned have purified me; there is nothing of the ordinary man left in me. After what I once was, if I could be vile for an instant, I would go hide myself at the ends of the earth, and never think myself far enough away from you.

What! I would upset that endearing order that I admired with such pleasure? I would sully that abode of innocence and peace where I dwelt with such respect? I could be dastardly enough.... now how could the most corrupt of men not be touched by such a charming tableau? how would he fail to recover the love of honesty in such a sanctuary? Far from bringing his bad morals with him, this is where he would come to purge himself of them.... who? I, Julie, I?... so late? under your very eyes?.... Dear friend, do not fear to open your house to me; for me it is the temple of virtue; everywhere in it I see her august image, and by your side I can

serve nothing else. I am not an angel, it is true; but I shall reside in their dwelling place, I shall imitate their examples; one flees them if one does not wish to be like them.

As you see, I am having some trouble coming to the main point of your Letter, the first I should have addressed, the only one I would pay attention to if I dared pretend to the benefit it promises me. O Julie! beneficent soul, incomparable friend! By offering me the worthy half of yourself, and the most precious treasure on earth after you, you do more, if that is possible, than you ever did for me. Love, blind love was able to force you to offer yourself, but to offer your friend is an incontestable proof of esteem. From this moment I truly believe I am a man of merit; for I am honored by you; but how cruel to me is the token of that honor! By accepting it, I would deny it, and to deserve it I must renounce it. You know me; judge me. It is not enough for your adorable Cousin to be loved; she must be loved like you, I know this; will she be? Can she be? And is it in my power to render to her on this point what she is entitled to? Ah if you wished to join me with her why did you not leave me a heart to give her, a heart in which she could inspire new sentiments of which it could offer her the firstfruits! Is there a heart less worthy of her than the one that knew how to love you? It would take the free and peaceable soul of the good and wise d'Orbe to be, as he was, occupied with her alone. One would have to be as good as he was to succeed him; otherwise the comparison with her former status would make the new one unbearable, and the feeble and inattentive love of a second husband far from consoling her for the first would make her miss him more. Of a tender and grateful friend she would have made a common husband. Would she gain in this exchange? she would lose twice over. Her delicate and sensible heart would feel this loss too deeply, and I, how could I bear the continual sight of a sadness of which I would be the cause, and of which I could not heal her? Alas! I would die of grief even sooner than she. No Julie, I will not procure my happiness at the expense of hers. I love her too well to marry her.

My happiness? No. Would I myself be happy not making her happy? in matrimony can either party pursue happiness separately? do they not have better and worse in common whatever their intentions, and do not the vexations they bring each other always fall back onto the one who causes them? I would be unhappy through her sufferings without being happy through her kindnesses. Grace, beauty, merit, attachment, fortune, all would conspire to my felicity; my heart, my heart alone would poison it all, and make me miserable in the bosom of happiness.

If my present situation is filled with the charm of her presence, far from that charm increasing thanks to a closer union, the sweetest pleasures I en-

joy in it would be taken away. Her bantering humor can permit her friendship an amiable flight, but only when there are witnesses to her caresses. I can have some overly strong emotion when I am with her, but only when your presence distracts me from you. It is you, ever between us when she and I are alone together, who make our conversations delightful. The more our attachment grows, the more we are reminded of the chains[72] that brought it into being; the sweet ties of our friendship draw tighter, and we love each other so as to talk about you. Thus a thousand memories dear to the one friend, even dearer to the other, join us two; joined by other bonds, we will have to give them up. Would not those enchanting memories be just so many infidelities toward her? And what effrontery were I to take a respected and cherished spouse as confidante of the insults my heart would inflict on her despite itself? Thus this heart would no longer dare pour itself out into hers, it would close itself up when approaching her. Not daring to talk with her about you, I would soon cease to talk about myself. Duty, honor, by imposing on me a new reserve toward her would make a stranger of my wife, and I would no longer have either guide or counselor to light my soul and correct my mistakes. Is this the homage she is to expect? Is this the tribute of tenderness and gratitude that I would bring her? Is it thus that I would procure her happiness and mine?

Julie, did you forget my vows along with yours?[73] For my part, I have not forgotten them. I have lost everything; my pledge alone remains to me; it will remain until the tomb. I have not been able to live as yours; I shall die free. If I could make such a commitment, I would make it today. For if it is a duty to marry, a yet more indispensable duty is to do no one harm, and all that remains for me to feel within other ties is the endless regret of those to which I once dared pretend. I would bring into that sacred union the notion of what I formerly hoped to find in it. That notion would be my torture and that of an unfortunate woman. I would call her to account for the happy days I anticipated from you. What comparisons would I have to draw! What woman on earth could sustain them? Ah! how could I console myself both for not belonging to you, and for belonging to someone else?

Dear friend, do not shake resolutions on which the peace of my days depends; do not seek to save me from the nothingness into which I have fallen; lest with the sentiment of my existence I recover that of my woes, and a violent condition reopen all my wounds. Since my return I have been aware with no sense of alarm of the more lively interest I was taking in your friend; for I well knew that the condition of my heart would never allow it to go too far, and seeing this new taste add to the already very tender attachment I always had for her, I have congratulated myself on an

emotion that helped me delude myself, and made me abide your image with less pain. That emotion entails something of the joys of love and none of its torments. The pleasure of seeing her is not perturbed by the desire to possess her; content to spend my entire life as I spent this last winter, I find between the two of you that peaceful* and sweet situation which tempers the austerity of virtue and makes its lessons enjoyable. If some vain transport agitates me a moment, everything represses and hushes it: I have overcome too many more dangerous ones to fear any others. I honor your friend as I love her, and that says everything. Were I mindful solely of my own interest, to me all the rights of intimate friendship with her are too dear for me to expose myself to losing them by trying to extend them, and I have not even needed to remind myself of the respect I owe her in order to avoid ever saying to her in private a single word that she should need to interpret or appear not to hear. If perchance she has sometimes found my behavior a little too eager, she surely has not observed in my heart the desire to express this. Such as I was six months in her company, such I shall be my whole life long. I know no one after you as perfect as she; but were she even more perfect than you are, I feel that one would have never to have been your lover to be able to become hers.

Before finishing this letter, I must tell you what I think of yours. I find in it along with all the prudence of virtue, the scruples of a timorous soul that considers it a duty to take fright, and believes one must fear everything so as to protect oneself from everything. This extreme timidity has its danger just as an excessive confidence does. By constantly pointing out monsters to us where there are none, it exhausts us in tilting against phantasms, and by dint of startling us without cause, it leaves us less on guard against genuine perils and allows us to discern them less clearly. Reread once in a while the letter Milord Edward wrote you last year about your husband[74]; you will find good advice there for your purposes in more than one respect. I find no fault with your devoutness, it is touching, amiable and sweet like you, even your husband must be pleased by it. But beware lest by making you timid and precautionary it lead you to quietism by an opposite approach, and lest in pointing out to you on every hand the risks you run, it finally prevent your acquiescing in anything.[75] Dear friend, do you not know that virtue is a state of war, and that living in it means one always has some battle to wage against oneself? Let us pay less attention to the dangers than to ourselves, in order to keep our souls ready for whatever may happen. If to look for opportunities is to deserve succumbing to

* He said exactly the opposite a few pages earlier. The poor philosopher between two lovely women seems to me in a pretty quandary. One would say he wants to love neither of them, so he can love them both.

them, to flee them too scrupulously is often to shirk important duties, and it is not good to be endlessly preoccupied with temptations, even to avoid them. I shall never be caught seeking out dangerous moments nor private conversations with women; but in whatever situation providence may henceforth place me, I have as my warrant the eight months I have spent at Clarens, and no longer fear that anyone will take from me the reward you have forced me to deserve. I will not be weaker than I have been, I will not have greater battles to wage; I have felt the bitterness of remorse, I have tasted the sweetness of victory, after such comparisons one no longer hesitates over the choice; everything including my past faults vouches to me for the future.

Without meaning to enter with you into new debates over the order of the universe and the direction of the beings that compose it, I shall limit myself to telling you that on questions so exceedingly far above man, he can judge the things he does not see only by induction from those he does see, and that all analogies are for those general laws you seem to reject. Reason itself and the soundest notion we can form of the supreme Being are very favorable to this opinion; for although his power has no need of method to facilitate his work, it is worthy of his wisdom to prefer the simplest paths nevertheless, so that there will be nothing useless in the means any more than in the effects. In creating man he endowed him with all the faculties needed for the accomplishment of what he required of him, and when we ask him for the power to do good, we ask him for nothing he has not already given us. He has given us reason to discern what is good, conscience to love it,*[76] and freedom to choose it.[77] It is in these sublime gifts that divine grace consists, and since we all have received them, we all are accountable for them.

I frequently hear people reasoning against man's freedom, and I despise all such sophisms, because it makes no difference if a reasoner proves to me that I am not free; inner sentiment, stronger than all his arguments, constantly belies him,[78] and whatever position I take in whatever deliberation, I am perfectly convinced that it is in my power to take the opposite position. All these scholastic subtleties are vain precisely because they prove too much, because they refute truth quite as easily as falsehood, and because whether or not freedom exists, they can equally serve to prove that it does not. To hear these folks God himself is not free, and this word freedom is devoid of meaning.[79] They triumph, not because they have resolved the question, but because they have put an illusion in its place. They

* St. Preux makes of moral conscience a sentiment and not a judgment, which goes against the definitions of the philosophers. I think however that in this their putative colleague is right.

begin by supposing that every intelligent being is purely passive, and then from this supposition they deduce consequences to prove that he is not active; what a handy method they have found there! If they accuse their adversaries of reasoning likewise, they are wrong. We do not assume that we are active and free; we can tell that we are. It is for them to prove not only that this sentiment could deceive us, but that it in fact deceives us.* The Bishop of Cloyne has demonstrated that without changing appearances in any way, matter and bodies could very well not exist[80]; does this suffice to affirm that they do not? In all of this, mere appearance is more complicated than reality; I keep to what is simpler.

I do not therefore believe that after having provided in every way for man's needs, God grants to the one and not to the other exceptional assistance, of which he who abuses the assistance common to all is unworthy, and of which he who makes good use of it has no need. This respect of persons is prejudicial to divine justice.[81] Were this harsh and discouraging doctrine deduced from Scripture itself, is not my first duty to honor God? Whatever deference I owe to the sacred text, I owe even more to its Author, and I would sooner believe the Bible falsified or unintelligible than God unjust or evil. St. Paul does not allow the vessel to say to the potter, why hast thou made me thus?[82] That is all very well if the potter demands nothing more of the vessel than services he has made it capable of rendering; but if he rebuked the vessel for not being suited to a use for which he had not made it, would the vessel be wrong to say to him, why didst thou make me thus?[83]

Does it follow from this that prayer is useless? God forbid I should deprive myself of this resource against my weaknesses. All acts of understanding that raise us up to God carry us beyond ourselves; by imploring his assistance we learn to find it. It is not he who changes us, it is we who change ourselves by raising ourselves up to him.** Everything we ask of him in the proper way is something we give to ourselves, and, as you have said, we increase our strength by recognizing our weakness. But if we abuse orison[84] and turn mystical, we lose ourselves by trying to go higher; seeking grace, we abandon reason; to obtain a gift from Heaven we tread another one under foot; while asking Heaven insistently to enlighten us

* This is not the real question in dispute. It is whether the will determines itself without cause, or else what is the cause that determines the will?

** Our gallant philosopher after imitating Abelard's conduct seems also to want to take up his doctrine. Their sentiments on prayer are very similar. Many people pointing to this heresy will opine that it would have been better to persist in his transgression than to fall into error; I do not see it that way. To err is a petty evil; misconduct is a great one. This does not, in my opinion, contradict what I have previously stated about the danger of false moral maxims. But something must be left for the reader to do.

we deprive ourselves of the lights it has given us. Who are we to try to oblige God to perform a miracle?

As you well know, there is nothing good that has not a reprehensible excess; even devoutness that devolves into delirium. Yours is too pure ever to reach this point: but the excess that leads to distraction precedes it, and it is of this first stage that you must beware. I have often heard you disapprove the ecstasies of ascetics; do you know how they come about? By prolonging the time devoted to prayer beyond what human frailty allows. Then the mind becomes exhausted, the imagination is kindled and spawns visions, one becomes inspired, prophetical, and no sense or genius can then preserve one from fanaticism. You frequently shut yourself up in your study; you meditate, you pray all the time; you do not yet frequent the pietists,*[85] but you read their books. I have never faulted your taste for the writings of the good Fénelon: but what are you doing with his disciple's?[86] You read Muralt, I do as well; but I choose his letters, and you choose his divine instinct. See how he ended up, deplore the ravings of this wise man, and look to yourself. Pious and Christian woman, are you henceforth going to be nothing but devout?[87]

Dear and respectable friend, I accept your warnings with a child's docility and give you mine with a father's zeal. Ever since virtue, far from breaking our ties, has made them indissoluble, its duties have merged with those of friendship. The same lessons fit us both, the same interest guides us. Never do our hearts speak to each other, never do our eyes meet but they offer to us both an objective of honor and glory that uplifts us jointly, and the perfection of each of us will always matter to the other. But if the deliberations are shared, the decision is not, it belongs to you alone. O you who always determined my fate, do not cease to be its arbiter, weigh my reflections, pronounce; however you dispose of me, I submit, I will be worthy at least that you not cease to guide me. Were I never to see you again, you will always be present to me, you will always preside over my deeds; were you to take away from me the honor of raising your children, you will not take away the virtues I have received from you; they are your soul's children, mine adopts them, and nothing can steal them from it.

Tell me honestly, Julie. Now that I have thoroughly explained to you what I feel and what I think, tell me what I must do. You know to what extent my fate is tied to my illustrious friend's. I have not consulted him on this occasion; I have shown him neither this letter nor yours. If he learns

* A kind of madmen who took it into their heads to be Christians, and follow the Gospel to the letter: more or less like the Methodists in England, the Moravians in Germany, the Jansenists in France; except that these latter have only to become the masters to be harsher and more intolerant than their enemies.

that you disapprove of his plan or rather your husband's, he will disapprove of it himself, and I am far from intending to conclude from this an objection to your scruples; it is simply appropriate that he be unaware of them until your final decision. In the meantime I shall find pretexts for deferring our departure which may surprise him, but in which he will surely acquiesce. For my part, I would rather never see you again than see you only to bid you a new farewell. To learn to be a stranger in your house is a humiliation I have not deserved.

LETTER VIII

from Madame de Wolmar

Well now! Hasn't that imagination of yours gone and taken fright again? And over what, pray? Over the truest tokens of esteem and friendship you have ever received from me; over the peaceable reflections that attention to your true happiness inspires in me; over the most obliging, the most advantageous, the most honorable proposition that was ever made to you; over the perhaps indiscreet haste to unite you with my family by indissoluble bonds; over the desire to make my ally, my relative, of an ingrate who believes or feigns to believe I no longer want him as my friend. To free yourself of your apparent anxiety, you only had to take what I write to you in its most natural meaning. But for a long time you have relished tormenting yourself with your unjust accusations. Your letter is like your life, sublime and groveling, full of strength and puerilities. My dear Philosopher, will you never cease to be a child?

Where then did you get the idea that I dreamed of imposing laws upon you, of breaking off our relationship, and as you put it yourself, of remanding you to the ends of the earth? In good faith, do you see the spirit of my Letter in that? All to the contrary. Enjoying in advance the pleasure of having you live with us, I feared the problems that might trouble it; I busied myself with the means of preventing those problems in an agreeable and gentle manner, by arranging for you a fortune worthy of your merit and of my attachment for you. That is my only crime; that was not cause, it seems to me, for you to become so alarmed.

You are wrong, my friend, for you know full well how dear you are to me; but you like being told over and over again, and as I am hardly less fond of repeating it, it is a simple matter for you to obtain what you want without bringing complaint or ill humor into it.

Be very sure therefore that if residing here suits you, it suits me just as much as you, and that of all that Monsieur de Wolmar has done for me, I

am grateful for nothing as much as the trouble he has taken to bring you into his house, and put you in a position to remain here. I admit it with pleasure, we are useful to each other. Better disposed to accepting good advice from others than to taking it from ourselves, both of us have need of guides, and who will better know what suits the one than the other who knows him so well? Who will better sense the danger of going awry, for knowing the full cost of a painful return? What object can better remind us of that danger? Before whom would we blush as much to disgrace so great a sacrifice? After breaking such ties, do we not owe it to their memory to do nothing unworthy of the reason we had for breaking them? Yes, this fidelity I mean always to maintain to you, to take you as witness to my life's every deed, and say to you at each sentiment that prompts me: this is what I chose in preference to you. Ah my friend! I know how to do credit to what my heart has so clearly felt: I can be weak in front of the whole world; but I answer for myself in front of you.

It is in this delicacy that always survives genuine love, rather than in Monsieur de Wolmar's subtle distinctions, that the reason must be sought for the elevation of soul and inner strength we experience at each other's side, and which I think I feel as you do. This explanation is at least more natural, more honorable to our hearts than his, and better helps us incite each other to do what is right; which is enough reason for preferring it. Therefore take my word for it that far from being in the curious disposition you suppose, the one I am in is directly opposite. If I should have to abandon the plan to bring us together, I would regard this change as a great misfortune for you, for me, for my children, and even for my husband who, as you know, has a considerable part in the reasons I have for desiring you to be here. But to speak only of my particular inclination, remember the moment of your arrival: did I manifest less joy in seeing you than you had when you accosted me? Did it seem to you that your residence at Clarens was disagreeable or burdensome to me? did you judge that I saw you leave with pleasure? Must I go the whole way, and speak to you with my usual candor? I shall confess to you without ambiguity that the last six months we have spent together have been the sweetest time of my life, and that I have tasted in this brief expanse all the blessings of which my sensibility has furnished me a notion.

I shall never forget one day this last winter, when, after reading together your voyages and your friend's adventures,[88] we had supper in the Salon d'Apollon, and when, mindful of the felicity God sent my way in this world, I saw all round me my father, my husband, my children, my Cousin, Milord Edward, you; not to mention Fanchon who in no way marred the tableau; and all of them gathered for the happy Julie. I said to

myself: this small room encloses all who are dear to my heart, and perhaps all the best people on earth; I am surrounded by all those I care about, for me all of creation is here; I enjoy at once the attachment I have for my friends, that which they return to me, that which they have for each other; their mutual solicitude either emanates from me or relates to me; everything I see is an extension of my being, and nothing divides it; it resides in all that surrounds me, no portion of it remains far from me; there is nothing left for my imagination to do, there is nothing for me to desire; to feel and to enjoy are to me one and the same thing; I live at once in all those I love, I am sated with happiness and life: O death, come when thou wilt! I have no more fear of thee, I have lived, I have anticipated thee, there are no new sentiments for me to experience, there is nothing more of which thou canst cheat me.

The more I have felt the pleasure of having you live with us, the happier I have been to depend on it, and the more anxiety I have experienced as well for anything that could trouble this pleasure. Let us leave aside for the moment that timorous morality and pretended devoutness you fault me for. Concede, at least, that the whole charm of the relationship that prevailed among us lies in that openness of the heart that places all sentiments, all thoughts in common, and makes it so that each one, feeling he is what he ought to be, reveals himself to all such as he is. Imagine for a moment some secret intrigue, some liaison that had to be hid, some reason for reserve and secrecy: instantly the whole pleasure of being together vanishes, we are constrained in each other's presence, we try to avoid contact, when we assemble we wish we could flee each other; circumspection, decorum bring on distrust and distaste. How can we long love those we fear? all become importunate to each other.... Julie importunate!..... importunate to her friend!... no, no, that cannot be; one never has evils to fear except those one can bear.

By laying out my scruples to you candidly, I did not presume to change your intentions, but to enlighten them; lest, adopting a decision without having foreseen all its consequences, you should perhaps have to repent of it when you no longer dared back out. With respect to the fears Monsieur de Wolmar did not have, it was not for him to have them, but for you. No one is judge of the danger that comes from within you but you yourself. Think well on it, then tell me it does not exist, and I shall no longer give it a thought: for I know your rectitude and it is not your intentions that I distrust. Though your heart may be capable of an unanticipated fault, very surely premeditated evil never came near it. That is what distinguishes the frail man from the wicked one.

Moreover, even were my objections better founded than I like to be-

lieve, why immediately suppose the worst as you do? I do not envisage the precautions to be taken as rigorously as you do. Is that reason enough suddenly to break off all your plans, and flee us forever? No, my gentle friend, such sorry expedients are not called for. Still a child in mind, you are already old in your heart. Great spent passions leave behind a distaste for new ones: the peace of soul that follows them is the only sentiment that grows through its own enjoyment. A sensible heart fears the calm it does not know; let it but experience it a single time, and it will no longer want to give it up. By comparing two such opposite states one learns to prefer the better one; but to compare them one has to know them. For my part, I see the moment of safety nearer for you, perhaps, than you do yourself. You have felt too much to feel for long; you have loved too much not to become indifferent: one does not rekindle the ash that comes out of the furnace, but one must wait until all of it is consumed. A few more years of attention to yourself, and you have no further risk to run.

The fortune I meant to arrange for you would have eliminated this risk; but independently of this consideration, that fortune was happy enough to have been envied for its own sake, and if your tact prevents you from venturing to aspire to it, I do not need you to tell me what such reservation may have cost you. But I am afraid that among your reasons there may be pretexts more specious than solid; I am afraid that in making a point of keeping commitments from which everything dispenses you and which no longer affect anyone, you create for yourself a false virtue of God knows what vain constancy more deserving of blame than praise, and henceforth utterly out of place. I have already told you this earlier, it is a second crime to respect a criminal vow; if yours was not criminal, it has become so; that is enough to annul it. The promise you must constantly keep is that of being an honorable man and one ever steadfast in his duty; for him to change when it does is not levity, it is constancy. You did right then, maybe, to promise what you would now do wrong to carry through. Do at all times what virtue requires: you will never give yourself the lie.

Now whether there is among your scruples any solid objection, this is something we will be able to examine at leisure. In the meantime, I am not too disappointed that you did not seize upon my idea as eagerly as I, so that my extravagance, if that is what it was, will be less cruel to you. I had devised this plan during my Cousin's absence. Since her return and after my letter went off, having had with her several general conversations about a second marriage, I have found her so cool to it that, despite all the penchant I know she has for you, I would fear I would have to be more heavy-handed than is my wont to overcome her reluctance, even in your favor; for there is a point where the empire of friendship must respect that

of the inclinations and principles each one makes for himself concerning duties that in themselves are arbitrary, but that are relative to the state of the heart that submits to them.

I admit to you that I still stand by my plan; it suits all of us so well, it would so honorably rescue you from the precarious state in which you live in the world, it would so well merge our interests, it would make for us so natural a duty of that friendship which is so sweet to us, that I cannot entirely give it up. No, my friend, you will never be too closely allied to me; it is not even enough that you should be my cousin; ah! I wish you could be my brother!

However all these ideas may work out, be not so unfair to my sentiments for you. Enjoy my friendship, my confidence, my esteem without reservation. Remember that I have nothing more to command you, and that I do not think I need to. Do not deprive me of the right to give you advice, but never imagine that I consider it mandatory. If you feel you can reside at Clarens without danger, come, stay here, I will be delighted. If you believe you must offer a few more years' absence to the still suspect remains of an impetuous youth, write to me often, come to see us when you wish, let us maintain the most intimate correspondence. What suffering is not assuaged by this consolation? What separation does one not bear with the hope of ending one's days together? I will do more; I am prepared to entrust one of my children to you; I will think him better off in your hands than in mine. When you bring him back to me, between the two I am not sure whose return will move me the more. If having become altogether reasonable you finally banish your illusions and wish to merit my cousin; come, love her, serve her, win her love completely; in truth, I believe you have already begun; win her heart and defeat the obstacles it puts in your way, I will assist you with all my strength. Fulfill, at last, each other's happiness, and my own will want nothing more. But, whatever decision you may take, after having thought it over seriously, take it in full assurance, and cease to slander your friend by accusing her of mistrusting you.

I am so preoccupied with you, I forget myself. Yet my turn must come; for you behave with your friends in disputation the way you do with your opponent at chess, you attack while you are defending. You excuse your being a philosopher by accusing me of being devout; it is as if I had given up wine when it had made you drunk. So I am devout, as you will have it, or on the verge of becoming so? So be it; do contemptuous labels change the nature of things? If devoutness is good, what is wrong with manifesting it? But perhaps this word is too lowly for you. Philosophical dignity disdains a vulgar rite; it wants to serve God more nobly; it extends its pre-

tensions and pride to Heaven itself. O my poor philosophers!.... let us return to me.

I have loved virtue since my childhood, and have cultivated my reason at every age. With sentiment and intelligence I have endeavored to govern myself, and I have conducted myself badly. Before taking from me the guide I have chosen, give me some other one on which I can depend. My good friend! forever arrogance, whatever we do; it is pride that uplifts you, and it is pride that humiliates me. I think I am as good as another woman, and a thousand others have lived more prudently than I. Then they must have had resources I did not. Why though persuaded I was born good have I needed to hide my life? Why did I hate the evil I committed despite myself? I knew only my own strength; for me it was not sufficient. I think I mustered all the resistance one can draw from oneself, and nonetheless I succumbed; how do those women who resist manage it? They have a better support.

Once I turned to this support as they had, I found another advantage in this choice that had not occurred to me. While the passions reign they help one bear the torments they inflict; they hold up hope alongside desire. As long as one desires one can do without happiness; one expects to achieve it; if happiness fails to come, hope persists, and the charm of illusion lasts as long as the passion that causes it. Thus this condition suffices to itself, and the anxiety it inflicts is a sort of enjoyment that compensates for reality.

Which is better, perhaps. Woe to him who has nothing left to desire! he loses, as it were, all he possesses. One enjoys less what one obtains than what one hopes for, and one is happy only before happiness is achieved. Indeed man, greedy and circumscribed, destined to crave everything and obtain little, has received from Heaven a consoling strength that brings everything he desires closer, submits it to his imagination, makes it seem present and palpable, delivers it to him, so to speak, and in order to make this imaginary property more delightful to him, modifies it as his passion dictates. But this whole spell disappears in the face of the object itself; nothing any longer embellishes this object in the eyes of its possessor; one does not fantasize what one beholds; imagination no longer embellishes anything one possesses, illusion ends where enjoyment begins. The land of illusions is on this earth the only one worth living in, and such is the void of things human that, with the exception of*[89] the Being who exists in himself, the only beauty to be found is in things that are not.

* She should have written *que hors*, and surely Madame de Wolmar was not unaware of this. But, in addition to the mistakes that escaped her out of ignorance or inadvertence, it seems she had too delicate an ear always to subject herself to the very rules she knew. One can use a purer style, but not a more graceful or more harmonious one than hers.

Although this effect does not always obtain for the particular objects of our passions, it never fails in the common sentiment that includes all passions.[90] To live without pain is not a human condition; to live thus is to be dead. He who could do anything without being God would be a miserable creature; he would be deprived of the pleasure of desiring; any other deprivation would be more bearable than that.*[91]

That is in part what I have been experiencing since my marriage, and since your return. All about me I see nothing but causes for contentment, and I am not content. A secret languor worms its way into my heart; I can feel how empty and oppressed it is, as you used to say of yours; my attachment for all those I hold dear does not suffice to occupy it, it still has some useless strength with which it knows not what to do. This affliction is peculiar, I concede; but it is not less real. My friend, I am too happy; I am weary of happiness.**

Can you conceive of any remedy for this disaffection with well-being? For my part, I confess to you that a sentiment that depends so little on reason has much diminished the value I placed on life, and I cannot imagine what sort of charm one can find in it that I lack or with which I should be satisfied. Will another woman be more sensible than I? Will she love her father, her husband, her children, her friends, her circle better? Will she be better loved by them? Will she lead a life more to her liking? Will she be more free to choose another? Will she enjoy better health? Will she have more resources against weariness, more attachments to the world? And yet I live in it with a heart ill at ease, which does not know what it lacks; it desires without knowing what.

Therefore, finding nothing here below that satisfies it, my avid soul seeks elsewhere what may fulfill it; rising to the source of sentiment and being, there it sheds its aridity and languor: there it is reborn, there it revives, there it finds new energy, there it draws new life; there it takes on another existence that is not tied to the bodily passions, or rather it is no longer in myself; it is wholly in the immense Being it gazes upon, and released for an instant from its shackles, it returns to them consoled by this trial of a more sublime state, which it hopes will one day be its own.

You smile; I hear you, my good friend; I pronounced my own sentence when I formerly reproved that prayerfulness which I confess I find con-

* Whence it follows that any Prince who aspires to despotism aspires to the honor of dying of boredom. If in any Realm on earth you are looking for the country's most bored man, always go directly to the sovereign, especially if he is very absolute. What a waste to make so many people wretched! couldn't he become bored at less cost?

** What, Julie! you too contradict yourself! Ah! I quite fear, devout charmer, that you are not, not even you, too much of one mind! Besides, I confess that this letter looks to me like the swan's song.

genial today. To that I have but one thing to reply, which is that I had not experienced it. In any case I do not even pretend to justify it. I do not contend that this taste is wise, I merely contend that it is sweet, that it makes up for the sentiment of happiness which is running dry, that it fills the soul's void, and that it brings renewed interest to a life spent deserving it. If it occasions some harm, it must doubtless be rejected; if it deceives the heart with false exaltation, again it must be rejected. But finally which holds faster to virtue, the philosopher with his grand principles, or the Christian in his simplicity? Which is the happier even in this world, the sage with his reason, or the devout man in his delirium?[92] What need have I to think, to imagine, at a time when all my faculties are alienated? Intoxication has its pleasures, as you used to say! Well now, this delirium is one kind. Either leave me in a state that suits me, or show me how I can be better off.

I used to reprove the ecstasies of mystics. I still reprove them when they detach us from our duties, and when drawing us away from the active life through the charms of contemplation, they lead us to that quietism you think me so close to, and from which I think I am as far removed as you.

To serve God is not to spend one's life kneeling in an oratory, I know that full well; it is to fulfill on earth the duties he imposes upon us; it is to do with a view to pleasing him everything that befits the condition in which he has placed us:

> *—il cor gradisce;*
> *E serve a lui ch' il suo dover compisce.*[93]
>
> The heart likes and serves him who accomplishes his duty.

First one must do one's duty, and then pray when one can. Such is the rule I try to follow; I do not take the piety you reproach me for as an occupation, but as a recreation, and I do not see why, among the pleasures that are within my grasp, I should refuse myself the most precious and innocent of all.

I have examined myself more closely since your letter. I have studied the effects on my soul of this inclination that seems to displease you so, and I cannot so far see anything in it to make me fear, at least so early on, abuse of an ill-conceived devoutness.

First of all I do not have an intense enough taste for this exercise to make me suffer when I am deprived of it, nor to put me in ill humor when I am distracted from it. Neither does it give me distractions during the day, nor cast distaste or impatience over the practice of my duties. If sometimes I must withdraw to my study, it is when I am stirred by some emotion and would feel less comfortable anywhere else. There, collecting my-

self, I recover the calm of reason. If some worry upsets me, if some grief afflicts me, I go and leave them there. All these trifles vanish in the face of a larger consideration. When I am mindful of all the favors of providence, it makes me ashamed to pay attention to such petty vexations and forget such great blessings. I require neither frequent nor long sessions. When sorrow follows me there in spite of myself, a few tears shed before him who comforts gives my heart instant relief. My reflections are never bitter or painful; my repentance itself is free of alarms; my faults give me less fright than shame; I have regrets and not remorse. The God I serve is a God of mercy, a father; it is his goodness that touches me; in my eyes it outshines all his other attributes; it is the only one I can apprehend. His power overwhelms me, his immensity dumbfounds me, his justice... he created man frail; since he is just, he is merciful. The God of vengeance is the God of the wicked,[94] I can neither fear him for myself, nor entreat him against another. O God of peace, God of goodness, it is thee I worship! it is thee, this I can tell, whose handiwork I am, and I hope to meet thee again at the last judgment such as thou speakest to my heart while I live.[95]

I cannot tell you how these thoughts fill my days with bliss and my heart with joy. Quitting my study thus disposed, I feel lighter and gayer. All pain vanishes, all problems disappear; nothing harsh, nothing sharp; everything becomes easy and smooth; everything in my eyes takes on a more cheerful look; it no longer seems to me at all difficult to be obliging; I love those I love all the more for it and am all the more pleasant to them. Even my husband is better pleased with my humor. Devoutness, he maintains, is an opium to the soul. It cheers, animates, and sustains when one takes but little: too strong a dose puts one to sleep, or drives one wild, or kills; I hope not to go that far.

You see that I take no offense at this epithet devout, perhaps not as much as you would have wished; but neither do I ascribe to it as high a value as you might think. I do not like, for instance, to see that status advertised by an outer affectation, and as a sort of occupation that dispenses from any other. Thus this Madame Guyon you tell me about would have done better, it seems to me, to discharge her duties as materfamilias attentively, raise her children in a Christian manner, govern her household wisely, than to go about writing devotional books, disputing with Bishops, and getting herself thrown into the Bastille for reveries no one can make any sense of. Neither do I like, for instance, that mystical and figurative language which feeds the heart on the figments of the imagination, and substitutes sentiments imitated from earthly love, and too likely to elicit it, for the genuine love of God. The more tender one's heart and the more lively one's imagination, the more one must avoid whatever tends to stir them; for ultimately, how can one see connections to the mystical object if one does not

also see the sensual object, and how dare an honest woman imagine with assurance objects she would not dare look upon?*[96]

But what has most estranged me from the professionally devout is that harshness of manner that makes them insensible to humanity, that excessive arrogance that makes them regard the rest of mankind with pity. If in their sublime elevation they deign to stoop to some act of kindness, it is in so humiliating a manner, they feel sorry for others in such a cruel tone, their justice is so rigorous, their charity so austere, their zeal so bitter, their contempt so perfectly resembles hatred, that their commiseration is more heartless than even the insensibility of the worldly. For them God's love is an excuse to love no one, they do not even love each other; was genuine friendship ever seen among the devout? But the more they separate themselves from their fellow men, the more they demand of them, and one would think they reach up to God only so they may exercise his authority on earth.

I feel an aversion for all these abuses which ought naturally to preserve me from them. If I fall into them, it will surely be without intending to, and I expect of the friendship of everyone around me that I will not do so without being warned.[97] I admit to you that I have long been, over my husband's fate, in an anxious state that would perhaps have in the long run corrupted my humor.[98] Fortunately Milord Edward's wise letter to which you refer me with good reason, his consoling and thoughtful discussions and yours, have wholly dispelled my fear and changed my principles. I see it is impossible for intolerance not to harden the soul. How can one tenderly cherish people whom one reproves? What charity can one retain among the damned? To love them would be to hate God who punishes them. Do we then wish to be human? let us judge deeds and not men. Let us not encroach on the horrible function of demons. Let us not so casually open hell to our brothers. Ah, if hell awaited those who make mistakes, what mortal could avoid it?

O my friends, what a weight you have taken off my chest! By teaching me that error is not a crime, you have delivered me from a thousand disquieting scruples. I leave aside the subtle interpretation of dogmas I do not understand. I stick to the resplendent truths that strike my eyes and convince my reason, the practical truths that instruct me in my duties. For all the rest, I have taken as my rule your earlier reply to Monsieur de Wolmar.**[99] Is one at liberty to believe or not to believe? Is it a crime not to have known how to put up a good argument? No; conscience does not tell

* This objection seems to me so solid and so unanswerable that if I had the least power in the Church, I would use it to excise the Song of Songs from our sacred books, and I would bitterly regret having waited so long.

** See Part V, lett. III, 477.

us the truth of things, but the rule of our duties; it does not dictate to us what we must think, but what we must do; it does not teach us to reason well, but to act well. In what way could my husband be guilty before God? Does he turn his eyes away from him? God himself has veiled his face.[100] He does not flee truth, it is truth that flees him. Pride does not guide him; he intends to lead no one into error, he is perfectly happy for others not to think as he does. He likes our sentiments, he would gladly share them, he cannot. Our hope, our consolations, are all beyond him. He does what is good without expecting a reward; he is more virtuous, more disinterested than we. Alas, he is to be pitied! But for what will he be punished? No, no, goodness, rectitude, morals, honesty, virtue: that is what Heaven demands and what it rewards; that is the true worship God wants from us, and that he receives from him every day of his life. If God judges faith by works, to be a man of honor is to believe in him. The true Christian is the just man; the true unbelievers are the wicked.

Do not be astonished then, my gentle friend, if I do not take issue with you over several points in your letter on which we are not of like mind. I know too well what you are to worry about what you believe. What do all these idle questions about freedom matter to me! Whether I am free to will the good on my own, or obtain that will through prayer, if I ultimately find the means to do good, does not all that amount to the same thing? Whether I give myself what I lack by asking for it, or whether God grants it to my prayer; if in any case in order to have it I must ask for it, do I need any further enlightenment? Only too happy to agree on the principal articles of our faith, why do we inquire further? Do we wish to plunge into those bottomless and shoreless abysses of metaphysics, and waste the brief time allotted us to honor the divinity in disputations over its essence? We do not know what it is, but we know that it is: let that suffice us; it makes itself manifest in its works, it makes itself felt within us. We can surely argue against it, but not mistake it in good faith. It has given us enough sensibility to perceive and touch it: let us pity those on whom such sensibility has not been bestowed, without flattering ourselves that we can enlighten them without its assistance. Who among us can do what it has not wished to do? Let us respect its decrees in silence and do our duty; that is the best means of teaching others their own.

Do you know anyone more full of sense and reason than Monsieur de Wolmar? anyone more sincere, more upright, more just, more true, less a prey to his passions, who has more to gain from divine justice and the immortality of the soul? Do you know a man more forceful, more lofty, more grand, more overpowering in dispute than Milord Edward? more worthy by his virtue to defend God's cause, more persuaded of his existence, more imbued with his supreme majesty, more zealous for his glory and more

equipped to sustain it? You saw what took place in the course of three months at Clarens; you saw two men full of esteem and respect for each other, far removed by virtue of their station and preference from pedantic hair-splitting, spend an entire winter together in wise and peaceable, but lively and deep, disputations to enlighten each other, attack each other and defend themselves, take hold of each other with all the purchase human understanding can muster, and over a subject in which the two having none but a common interest asked no better than to be in agreement.

What was the outcome? Their mutual esteem grew, but each remained in his own sentiment. If this example does not forever cure a wise man of disputation, love of truth is of no concern to him; he is trying to show off.

For my part, I abandon forever that useless weapon, and have resolved never to say another word of Religion to my husband unless the time comes to offer a rationale for my own. Not that the idea of divine tolerance has rendered me indifferent to the need he has of it. I even confess to you that although reassured about his future fate, I do not because of that feel my zeal for his conversion diminished. I would wish at the cost of my blood to see him finally convinced, if not for his happiness in the next world then for his happiness in this one. For what comforts is he not missing? What sentiment can console him in his sufferings? What observer inspires the good deeds he performs in secret? What voice can speak in the depths of his soul? What reward can he expect for his virtue? How must he envisage death? No, I do hope that he will not await it in this horrible state. I have one remaining means to save him from it, and am devoting the rest of my life to that: it is no longer to convince him, but to touch him; to show him an example that might entice him, and render Religion so attractive that he cannot resist it. Ah my friend! what an argument against the unbeliever is the life of the true Christian! do you believe there exists a soul that is proof against it? Such is henceforth the task I am assuming; assist me all of you in fulfilling it. Wolmar is cold, but he is not insensible. What a tableau we can present to his heart, when his friends, his children, his wife, all contribute to instructing him by edifying him! When without preaching God to him in their words, they manifest him in the actions he inspires, in the virtues of which he is author, in the delight we take in pleasing him! When he sees the image of Heaven shining in his house! when a hundred times a day he is obliged to say to himself: no, man is not thus by himself, something more than human reigns here!

If this undertaking is to your liking, if you feel you are worthy to take part in it, come, let us spend our days together and never more part until death. If the plan displeases or frightens you, listen to your conscience; it dictates your duty. I have no more to say to you.

According to the information received from Milord Edward, I expect

you both toward the end of next month. You will not recognize your apartment; but in the changes that have been made, you will recognize the attentions and the heart of a good friend, who made it her pleasure to provide the decoration. You will also find there a small assortment of books she picked in Geneva, better and in better taste than the *Adone*, although it too is there by way of jest.[101] However, be discreet, for as she does not mean for you to know that all that is her doing, I hasten to write to you about it, before she forbids me to mention it.

Farewell, my friend. That excursion to the Château of Chillon*[102] which we were all to take together will take place tomorrow without you. It will not be the better for it, although we will take it with pleasure. Monsieur le Bailli[103] has invited us with our children, which left me no excuse; but I know not for what reason, I wish it were already over.

LETTER IX

From Fanchon Anet

Ah Monsieur! Ah my benefactor! what tidings have they instructed me to send you?.... Madame!.... my poor mistress.... O God, I already can see your alarm.... but you do not see our consternation.... I have not a moment to lose; I must tell you,.... I must hurry.... I wish I had already finished saying it.... Ah what will become of you when you know of our misfortune?

The whole family went to dine yesterday at Chillon. Monsieur le Baron, who was going to Savoie to spend a few days at the Château of Blonay,[104] left after dinner. We accompanied him a short distance; then we went walking along the dike. Madame d'Orbe and Madame la Baillive were walking ahead with Monsieur. Madame was following behind, holding Henriette by one hand and Marcellin by the other. I was behind them with the elder child. Monseigneur le Bailli, who had paused to speak to someone, caught up with the company and offered his arm to Madame. To take it, she sent Marcellin back to me; he ran toward me, I ran toward him; as he ran the

* The Château of Chillon, former residence of the Bailiffs of Vevey, is situated in the lake on a rock that forms a Peninsula, and around which I have witnessed soundings of over one hundred fifty fathoms which make nearly 800 feet, without hitting bottom. In this rock cellars and kitchens have been hollowed out below the level of the water, which can when needed be fed in by stopcocks. It is there that François Bonnivard, Prior of Saint-Victor, a man of rare merit, unflinchingly upright and strong, a friend of liberty although he was a Savoyard, and tolerant although he was a Priest, was kept prisoner for six years. Moreover, in the year when these last letters seem to have been written, the Bailiffs of Vevey had long since left the Château of Chillon. One may suppose, if one likes, that the bailiff of that period had gone to spend a few days there.

child stumbled, he lost his footing and fell into the water. I shrieked; Madame turned about, saw her son fall, flew like a dart, and threw herself after him....

Ah! wretched me not to have done as much! would I had died doing so!.... Alas! I held back the elder child who wanted to jump in after his mother.... she was floundering about, clutching the other to her.... we had neither servants nor boat there, it took some time to pull them out.... the child has recovered, but the mother.... the shock, the fall, the state she was in.... who knows better than I how dangerous this fall is!.... she remained unconscious for a long time. Hardly had she regained consciousness than she asked for her son.... with what transports of joy did she embrace him! I thought she was saved; but her animation lasted but an instant; she wished to be brought back here; along the way she swooned several times. From some orders she has given me I see that she does not expect to recover. I am too unhappy, she will not recover. Madame d'Orbe is more affected than she. Everyone is in a state of agitation.... I am more secure than anyone else in the household.... what have I to worry about?....[105] My good mistress! Ah if I lose you, I will no longer have need of anyone.... Oh my dear Monsieur, may the good Lord sustain you in this trial.... Farewell.... the Doctor is leaving the room. I run to meet him.... if he gives us some hope for the better, I will add a word to that effect. If I say nothing....

LETTER X

Begun by Madame d'Orbe, and completed by Monsieur de Wolmar

It is all over. Imprudent, unfortunate man, unhappy visionary! You will never see her again.... the veil.....[106] Julie is no....

She has written to you. Await her letter: honor her last requests. You still have important duties on earth to fulfill.

LETTER XI

From Monsieur de Wolmar

I have allowed your initial afflictions to pass in silence; my letter could only have embittered them; you were no more in a condition to bear these details than I to produce them. Today they will perhaps be sweet to both

of us. I have only memories left of her, my heart takes pleasure in collecting them! There is nothing left for you to give her but tears; you will have the consolation of shedding them for her. This pleasure of the bereaved is denied me in my misery; I am more unhappy than you.

I wish to speak with you not about her illness but about her. Other mothers can plunge after their child: the accident, the fever, death are natural: this is the common fate of mortals; but the use she made of her last moments, her words, her sentiments, her soul, all that belongs to Julie alone. She did not live like other women: no one, so far as I know, has died as she did. This I alone have been able to observe, and you will learn it only from me.

You know that the terror, the emotion, the fall, the draining of the water left her in a prolonged faint from which she completely recovered only back here. When she arrived, she asked again for her son, he came; no sooner had she seen him walk and respond to her caresses than she became completely calm, and agreed to rest a little. Her sleep was short, and as the Doctor still had not come, while awaiting him she had Fanchon, her cousin, and me sit round her bed. She spoke to us of her children, of the diligent care required for them by the form of education she had adopted, and of the danger of neglecting it for an instant. Without attributing great importance to her illness, she foresaw that it would prevent her for some time from fulfilling her share of that same care, and instructed us all to divide up that share in addition to our own.

She expatiated on all her plans, on yours, on the means most apt to bring them to fruition, on the observations she had made and which could favor or thwart them, in short on everything that would enable us to compensate for her maternal functions for as long as she were obliged to suspend them. That was, thought I, a good many precautions for someone who believed she was deprived of so dear an occupation for only a few days; but what thoroughly terrified me was to see that with regard to Henriette she went into much greater detail yet. She had limited herself to what concerned her sons' early childhood as if yielding the care of their youth to someone else; for her daughter she spanned all the periods, and well aware that no one would compensate on this point for the reflections her own experience had led her to make, she laid out to us succinctly, but forcibly and clearly, the program of education she had prepared for her, using with the mother the most urgent reasons and the most moving exhortations to commit her to following it.[107]

All these ideas on the education of young ladies and the duties of mothers, mixed with frequent reflections on her own experience, could not fail to warm up the conversation; I saw that it was becoming too animated.

Claire held one of her Cousin's hands, and pressed it at every moment to her lips, sobbing in sole reply; Fanchon was no more composed; and as for Julie, I noticed that tears also were gathering in her eyes, but that she dared not cry, for fear of alarming us further. At once I said to myself: she sees herself already dead. The only hope I had left was that the scare might be deceiving her about her condition and representing the danger as greater than perhaps it was. Unfortunately I knew her too well to count very much on this error. I had tried several times to calm her; I begged her once more not to become unnecessarily worked up over discussions we could take up later at leisure. Ah, she said, nothing hurts women as much as silence! and besides I feel I have some fever; it makes me talkative and I might as well address useful topics, rather than beating about the bush for no reason.

The Doctor's arrival occasioned in the household an agitation that is impossible to depict. All the domestics were waiting on top of each other at the door of her room, with an anxious eye and hands joined, for his opinion on their mistress's condition, as the verdict on their fate. This spectacle threw poor Claire into an agitation that made me fear for her mind. I had to dispatch them under various pretexts in order to remove that object of fright from her sight. The Doctor vaguely gave some slight hope, but in a tone that could only take away my own. Neither did Julie say what she was thinking; her Cousin's presence held her in check. When he exited, I followed him; Claire started to do the same, but Julie held her back and signalled to me with a glance I understood. I hastened to alert the Doctor that if there was any danger it must be concealed from Madame d'Orbe with as much and more care as from the patient, lest despair utterly derange her, and leave her in no condition to assist her friend. He declared that there was indeed some danger, but that scarcely twenty-four hours having passed since the accident, more time was required to establish a reliable prognosis, that the following night would determine the outcome of the illness, and that he could not pronounce on it until the third day. Fanchon was sole witness to his words, and after prevailing upon her, not without difficulty, to control herself, we agreed on what would be said to Madame d'Orbe and the rest of the household.

Toward evening Julie obliged her Cousin, who had spent the previous night at her side and also intended to spend the next, to go rest a few hours. During this time, the patient, having learned they were going to bleed her foot and that the Doctor was writing up prescriptions, sent for him and addressed him as follows: "Monsieur Du Bosson, when one thinks it necessary to deceive a patient anxious about his condition, that is a humane precaution of which I approve; but it is cruelty to lavish super-

fluous and disagreeable care equally upon them all, many of whom have no need of it. Prescribe for me whatever you judge genuinely useful to me, I shall obey to the letter. As for remedies that are for the imagination alone, spare me them; it is my body and not my mind that suffers, and I do not fear to end my days but to misuse those that remain. The last instants of life are too precious for abusing them to be allowed. If you cannot prolong mine, at least do not shorten it by taking from me the use of the few moments left to me by nature. The fewer I have remaining, the more you must respect them. Let me live or leave me alone: I will manage to die by myself." Such is the way this woman so timid and so gentle in everyday affairs managed to find a firm and serious tone of voice on important occasions.

The night was cruel and decisive. Suffocation, hardness of breath, syncope; dry, burning skin. A high fever, during which we often heard her call urgently for Marcellin, as if to keep him from falling; and also sometimes pronounce another name, once so much repeated on a similar occasion.[108] The next day the Doctor declared to me plainly that he did not deem that she had three days to live. I was the sole depositary of this awful secret, and the most terrible hour of my life was that one when I harbored it in the depths of my heart without knowing what use I ought to make of it. I went wandering alone among the groves, contemplating the decision I had to make; not without some sorrowful reflections on the fate that was returning me in my old age to this solitary state, of which I was tiring even before I came to know a happier one.

The day before, I had promised Julie that I would relate to her faithfully the Doctor's pronouncement; she had entreated me by everything that could touch my heart to keep my word to her. This commitment weighed on my conscience: but after all! for an illusory and futile duty did I have to dismay her soul, and make her savor death in long draughts? What could be to my eyes the purpose of so cruel a precaution? Would announcing her last hour to her not make it arrive sooner? In so brief an interval what becomes of desires, hope, the elements of life? Is it still to enjoy life to see oneself so near the instant of losing it? Was it for me to put her to death?

I was walking hurriedly in an agitation I had never experienced. This long and painful anxiety followed me about; I dragged its unbearable weight around with me. A thought finally came to me that made up my mind. Do not attempt to anticipate it; I must relate it to you.

For whom am I deliberating, is it for her or for me? By what principle am I reasoning, is it by her system or by mine? What is proven to me by the one or the other? I have only, for believing what I believe, my own opinion buttressed by a few probabilities. No proof overturns it, this is

true, but what proof establishes it? For believing what she believes, she too has her own opinion, but to her it seems obvious; in her eyes this opinion is a proof. What right have I to prefer, where she is concerned, my simple opinion which I recognize as doubtful to her opinion which she holds proven? Let us compare the consequences of the two sentiments. With hers, the use made of her last hour is to decide her fate for eternity.[109] With mine, my intention of dealing gently with her will be indifferent to her in three days. In three days, according to me, she will feel nothing at all. But if she perhaps were right, what a difference! Eternal blessings or sufferings!.... Perhaps!.... how terrible is this word.... thou wretch! risk thy soul and not hers.

That was the first doubt that made me call into question the uncertainty you have so often attacked.[110] It is not the last time it has recurred since that day. In any case, that doubt delivered me from the one that was tormenting me. I at once made my decision, and for fear of changing it, I hastened to Julie's bedside. I sent everyone away, and sat down; you can imagine with what countenance! With her I made no use of the precautions that smaller souls require. I said nothing; but she saw me, and instantly understood. Do you think this is news to me, she said holding out her hand to me? No my friend, I am all right: death urges me on; we must part.

She then delivered a long monologue I will have occasion to tell you about some day, in the course of which she wrote her testament[111] in my heart. If I had known hers less well, her last wishes would have sufficed to reveal it to me.

She asked me whether her condition was known about the house. I told her that it was in a state of alarm, but that nothing positive was known and that Du Bosson had confided in me alone. She implored me to keep the secret strictly for the rest of the day. Claire, she added, will never withstand this blow except from my hand; it will kill her if it comes from someone else's. I reserve this coming night for that sad duty. That is the main reason why I wanted to have the Doctor's opinion, so as not to subject the unfortunate woman solely on the basis of my own sentiment to being falsely dealt such a cruel shock. See to it that she suspects nothing before the time comes, or you risk remaining here without her and leaving your children motherless.

She spoke to me of her father. I confessed to having sent him a Messenger; but I was careful not to say that the man, instead of limiting himself to delivering my letter as I had ordered, had hastened to speak, and so crassly, that my old friend thinking his daughter had drowned, had fallen from fright on the stairway, and received a wound that kept him bedridden at Blonay. The hope of seeing her father much affected her, and my certainty

of the vanity of this expectation was not the least of the afflictions I had to repress.

The redoubled fever of the previous night had enormously weakened her. This long talk had done nothing to strengthen her; in her state of exhaustion she tried to get some rest during the day; I learned only two days later that she had not spent it all sleeping.

Meanwhile consternation reigned in the house. Each person waited in dull silence for someone to relieve his misery, and dared question no one, for fear of learning more than he wanted to know. Everyone said to himself, if there is good news someone will hasten to announce it; if there is bad news, we will always find out only too soon. In the grip of such terror, they were sufficiently content if nothing new transpired. In the midst of this dull quiet, Madame d'Orbe was the only one acting and talking. The minute she was outside Julie's room, instead of going to rest in her own, she ran about the whole house, she stopped everyone, asking what the Doctor had said, what the others said? She had been witness to the previous night, she could not dismiss what she had seen; but she was trying to deceive herself, and reject what her eyes had witnessed. Since those she asked made nothing but favorable answers, she was encouraged to ask the others, and in each case with such keen anxiety, such frightful countenance, that you could have known the truth a thousand times without being tempted to tell her.

With Julie she contained herself, and the touching object she had before her eyes disposed her more to affliction than to violent expression. She feared above all allowing Julie to perceive her anxieties, but she ill succeeded in concealing them. Her agitation could be detected in the very way she affected calm. Julie for her part spared nothing to mislead her. Without mitigating her illness she referred to it as practically a thing of the past, and seemed concerned only about the time it would take her to recover. It was another of my tortures to see them attempting to reassure each other, I who knew so well that neither of the two possessed in her soul the hope she attempted to communicate to the other.

Madame d'Orbe had stayed up the two previous nights; it had been three days since she had undressed. Julie suggested that she go to bed; she would have nothing of it. Well then, said Julie, have them set up a little bed for her in my room, unless, she added as if by way of afterthought, she wants to share mine. What say you, Cousin? my illness is not catching, you do not find me repulsive, sleep in my bed; the proposal was accepted. As for me, I was sent off, and I genuinely needed rest.

I was up early. Anxious to learn what had taken place during the night, at the first sound I heard I entered the bedroom. From Madame d'Orbe's

condition the night before, I gauged the despair I would find her in and the rantings I would witness. Upon entering I saw her seated in an armchair, haggard and pale, or rather livid, her eyes leaden and almost lifeless; but she was gentle, quiet, she spoke little, and did all she was told, without answering. As for Julie, she appeared less weak than the night before, her voice was steadier, her gestures more animated; she seemed to have taken on her Cousin's animation. I easily recognized from her color that this apparent improvement was the effect of fever: but I also saw glimmering in her eyes I know not what secret joy that might have contributed to it, the cause of which I could not determine. The Doctor nonetheless confirmed his verdict of the night before; the patient nonetheless continued to think likewise, and I had no hope left at all.

Having been obliged to absent myself for a while, I noted upon my return that her rooms were carefully arranged; they bespoke order and elegance; she had had pots of flowers placed on her mantlepiece; her curtains were partially drawn and tied; fresh air had been let in; one was met by a pleasant smell; you would never have thought you were in a sickroom. She had dressed with the same care: grace and taste were further manifest in her casual adornment. All this gave her rather the appearance of a woman of the world awaiting company than of a woman of the country awaiting her last hour. She saw my surprise, smiled at it, and reading into my thoughts, she was going to answer me, when the children were brought in. Then she attended only to them, and you can gauge whether, aware that she was so near the point of leaving them, her caresses were lukewarm and moderate! I even observed that she returned more frequently and with even more ardent embraces to the one who was costing her her life, as if he had at that price become dearer to her.

All these embraces, these sighs, these transports were mysteries for these poor children. They loved her tenderly, but it was the tenderness of their age; they understood nothing about her condition, about her renewed caresses, about her regrets at not seeing them again; they saw we were sad and they wept: they knew no more than that. Although children are taught the name of death, they have no notion of it; they fear it neither for themselves nor for others; they are afraid of suffering and not of dying. When sorrow wrested a whimper from their mother, they pierced the air with their cries; when they were told about losing her, one would have thought them dim-witted. Henriette alone, a little older, and of a sex in which sentiment and understanding develop earlier, appeared upset and alarmed to see her petite-maman in bed, she who was always to be found up before her children. I remember that on this subject Julie made a remark altogether in character about the idiotic vanity of Vespasian who

stayed in bed while he could act, and got up when there was longer anything he could do.*[112] I do not know, she said, whether an Emperor must die on his feet, but I know very well that a materfamilias must take to bed only when she dies.

After pouring out her heart with her children; after taking each one separately, especially Henriette whom she held a good long while, and who was heard to whimper and sob while receiving her kisses, she called all three, gave them her blessing, and told them as she pointed to Madame d'Orbe, go my children, go fall at your mother's feet: she is the one God is giving you, he has taken nothing from you. At once they ran to her, placed themselves at her knees, took her hands, called her their bonne-maman,[113] their second mother. Claire leaned over them; but while hugging them in her arms she vainly attempted to speak, she found nothing but moans, she never managed to utter a single word, she was suffocating. Imagine whether Julie was moved! This scene was beginning to become excessively intense; I put an end to it.

That tearful moment once past, we began again to talk around her bed, and although Julie's animation was somewhat abated by her renewed fever, one could see the same air of contentment on her face; she talked about everything with an attention and an interest that revealed a mind quite free from cares; she did not miss a thing, she took part in the conversation as if she had nothing else to do. She proposed we have dinner in her room, to be with us as much as possible; you may believe that it was not refused. We were served without noise, without disarray, without ado, in as orderly a fashion as if we had been in the Salon d'Apollon. Fanchon, the children dined with us. Julie seeing we had little appetite found the way to make us eat some of everything, now on the pretext of instructing her cook, now to see whether she would dare take some herself, now motivating us with our own health which we needed in order to assist her, always manifesting the pleasure we could give her in such a way as to preclude any means of declining, and mingling with all this a playfulness meant to distract us from the sad business that occupied us. In fact a lady of the house, attentive to doing the honors, would not in full health have more obliging, more kind, more signal attentions for strangers than the dying Julie did for her family. Nothing of what I had foreseen came to pass, nothing of what I saw made sense in my head. I no longer knew what to expect; I was at a loss.

After dinner, the Minister was announced. He came as a friend of the

* This is not quite accurate. Suetonius says that Vespasian worked as usual on his deathbed, and even gave audience: but perhaps, indeed, it would have been better had he arisen to give audience, and lain down again to die. I know that Vespasian although not a great man was at least a great Prince. Never mind; whatever role one may have played in life, one must not act the comedian in death.

house, which he did quite frequently. Although I had not sent for him, because Julie had not asked for him, I confess to you that I was delighted by his arrival, and I do not think that in such circumstances the most zealous believer could have greeted him with greater pleasure. His presence was to clear up many doubts and extricate me from a strange quandary.

Remember the motive that had inclined me to inform her that her end was nigh. Compared to the effect I expected this awful news to have, how was I to understand the one it really had produced? What! this devout woman who in a state of health never spends a day without meditation, who makes prayer one of her pleasures, has only two days left to live, she sees herself ready to appear before the fearsome judge; and instead of preparing herself for that terrible moment, instead of putting her conscience in order, she amuses herself decorating her room, dressing, chatting with her friends, cheering up their meals; and in all her conversations not a word about God nor about salvation! What was I to think of her and her true sentiments? How could I make her conduct square with the notions I had of her piety? How reconcile the use she was making of the last moments of her life and what she had said to the Doctor about their value? All this posed for me an inexplicable enigma. For after all, although I did not expect to find in her all the petty bigotry of devout women, it nonetheless seemed to me that this was the time for turning to something on which she placed such importance, and which suffered no delay. If one is devout in the bustle of this life, how would he not be at the moment when he must relinquish it, and there is nothing remaining to do but think about the next?

These reflections brought me to a point I would never have expected to reach. I nearly began to worry that finally my indiscreetly sustained opinions had made too much progress in her. I had not adopted hers, and yet I would not have wished her to have given them up. Had I been ill I would certainly have died in my sentiment, but I wanted her to die in hers, and it seemed to me, in a manner of speaking, that with her I was risking more than with me. To you these contradictions will seem extravagant; I do not find them reasonable, and yet they were real. I do not presume to justify them; I simply report them.

Finally the moment came when my doubts were going to be cleared up. For it was easy to foresee that sooner or later the Pastor would bring the conversation round to the purpose of his ministry; and had Julie been capable of disguise in her replies, it would have been most difficult to disguise herself enough so that I, attentive and forewarned, would have failed to detect her true sentiments.

All took place as I had foreseen. I leave aside the commonplaces mixed

with praise, that served the minister as transition to get to his subject; I also leave aside the stirring things he said about the happiness of crowning a good life with a Christian end. He added that in truth he had sometimes found that she held sentiments on certain points that did not entirely agree with Church doctrine, that is with such doctrine as the soundest reason could deduce from Scripture; but as she had never been obstinate about defending them, he hoped that she meant to die as she had lived in the communion of the faithful, and acquiesce in all points in the common profession of faith.[114]

As Julie's reply was decisive for my doubts, and was not, when it comes to commonplaces, like the exhortation,[115] I am going to relate it to you almost word for word, for I had listened carefully, and I went to write it down immediately.[116]

"Allow me, Monsieur, first to thank you for all the care you have taken to guide me in the straight road of morality and Christian faith, and for the patience with which you have corrected or borne my errors when I have gone astray. Filled with respect for your zeal and gratitude for your kindnesses, I declare with pleasure that I owe to you all my good resolutions, and that you have always encouraged me to do what was good, and believe what was true.

"I have lived and I die in the protestant communion which draws its sole rule from Holy Scripture and from reason; my heart has always confirmed what my mouth uttered, and when I have not manifested for your insights all the deference I perhaps should have, that was an effect of my aversion for every kind of disguise; I could not say I believed what it was impossible for me to believe; I have always sincerely searched for what was in conformity with the glory of God and with truth. I may have made mistakes in my searching; I am not arrogant enough to think that I have always been right; perhaps I have always been wrong; but my intention has always been pure, and I have always believed what I said I believed. On this point that was all I could possibly have done. If God has not enlightened my reason beyond that, he is merciful and just; could he ask me to account for a gift he has not given me?

"This, Monsieur, is everything essential I had to tell you about the sentiments I have professed. About all the rest, my present condition answers you in my place. Distracted by illness, in the delirium of fever, is it timely to try to reason better than I have done when I enjoyed an understanding as sound as the day I received it?[117] If I went wrong then, would I do so less today, and in my present prostration is it in my power to believe otherwise than I have believed when I was in health? It is reason that decides which sentiment one prefers, and mine having lost its optimal capacities,

what authority can its remains lend to the opinions I would adopt without it? In consequence what should I do? Simply rely upon what I have believed until now: for the rectitude of intention is the same, less the faculty of judgment. If I am in error, it is without loving error; that suffices to assure me about my belief.[118]

"As for preparing for death, Monsieur, that is done; poorly, it is true, but as best I could, and better at least than I could do now. I have endeavored not to delay discharging this important duty until I should be incapable of it. I prayed in health; now I submit. The prayer of the sick is patience. Preparation for death is a good life; I know no other. When I conversed with you, when I meditated alone, when I tried to discharge the duties God imposes on me; it was then I was preparing myself to appear before him; it was then I worshipped him with all the strength he gave me; what could I do now that I have lost it; is my estranged soul in a condition to reach up to him? Are these remains of a life half snuffed-out, taken up by suffering, worthy of being offered to him? No, Monsieur; he leaves them for me to give to those he made me love and whom he wills me to leave; I bid them farewell to go to him; it is to them I must devote myself: soon I will be devoted to him alone. My last pleasures on earth are also my last duties; is it not to serve him still and do his will to discharge the cares that humanity assigns me, before shedding this flesh? What could be done to appease anxieties I do not have? My conscience is not troubled; if it has occasionally given me fears, I had more of them in health than today. My confidence cancels them; it tells me that God is more merciful than I am a sinner, and my assurance grows as I feel myself drawing nearer to him. I do not bring before him an imperfect, tardy, and forced repentance, which dictated by fear could not possibly be sincere, and is only a trap for deceiving him. I do not bring before him the remnant and refuse of my days, full of suffering and infirmities, a prey to illness, to sufferings, to the anguishes of death, and which I would give to him only if there were no further use I could make of them. I bring before him my entire life, full of sins and faults, but free from the remorse of the impious and the crimes of the wicked.

"To what torments could God condemn my soul? They say that reprobates hate him! Then he would have to make me stop loving him? I do not fear I will add to their number. O great Being! Eternal Being, supreme intelligence, source of life and felicity, creator, preserver, father of man and King of nature, almighty, all good God, whom I never doubted for an instant, and before whose eyes I always happily lived! I know, I rejoice in it: I am about to appear before thy throne. In not many days my soul free from its flesh shall begin to offer thee more worthily the immortal homage

that is to constitute my happiness for eternity. I count for nothing all I shall do until that moment. My body still lives, but my moral life is over. I am at the end of my career and already judged on the past. To suffer and die is all it remains for me to do; that is nature's business. But I have tried to live in such a way as to have no need to think about death, and now that it draws near, I see it approaching with no terror. Those who go to sleep in their father's bosom need not worry about their awakening."

This monologue spoken first in a grave and steady tone, then with more emphasis and in a louder voice, made on all those present, myself not excepted, an impression all the more potent that the eyes of her who spoke it shone with a supernatural fire; a new glow lit up her countenance, she appeared radiant, and if there is anything on earth that merits the name celestial, it was her face as she spoke.

The Pastor himself astonished, transported by what he had just heard, cried out, lifting his eyes and hands toward Heaven: Great God! this is the worship that honors thee; deign to show favor upon it, men offer thee little like it.

Madame, he said drawing closer to her bed, I thought I came to edify you, and it is you who edify me. I have nothing more to say to you. You possess the true faith, the one that makes us love God. Take with you this precious peace of a clear conscience, it will not deceive you; I have seen many Christians in your condition, I have found it in you alone. What a difference between such a peaceful end and that of those tormented sinners who pile up so many vain and barren prayers only because they are unworthy of being heard! Madame, your death is as beautiful as your life. You have lived for charity; you die a martyr to maternal love. Whether God gives you back to us to serve as our example, or calls you to himself to crown your virtues, may we all such as we are live and die like you! We shall be very sure of happiness in the next life.

He motioned to leave; she retained him. You are one of my friends, she said to him, and one of those I see with the greatest pleasure; it is for them that my last instants are precious to me. We will part for so long that we must not part so soon. He was delighted to remain, and thereupon I went out.

Upon returning, I saw that the conversation had continued on the same subject, but in another tone, and as if about indifferent matters. The Pastor was talking about the false spirit imputed to Christianity by making of it merely the Religion of the dying, and of its Ministers men of ill omen. We are regarded, he said, as messengers of death, because following the convenient opinion that a quarter-hour of repentance suffices to expunge fifty years of crimes, people like to see us only at that juncture. We have to

cloak ourselves in a lugubrious color; we have to affect a severe mien; nothing is spared to make us look frightening. In other faiths, it is still worse. A dying catholic is surrounded by nothing but objects that terrify him, and ceremonies that bury him alive. The care they take to scare off the Demons makes him believe he sees his room filled with them; he dies a hundred deaths of terror before he is finished off, and the Church likes to plunge him into this state of fright the better to get at his purse. Let us give thanks to Heaven, said Julie, for not being born into those venal Religions that kill people in order to be their inheritors, and that, selling paradise to the rich, carry even into the next life the unjust inequality that reigns in this one. I have no doubt that all these somber notions foment unbelief, and communicate a natural aversion for the creed that feeds them. I hope, she said looking at me, that he who is to raise our children will adopt entirely opposite maxims, and not make Religion seem to them lugubrious and sad, by constantly mixing with it thoughts of death. If he teaches them to live well, they will know well enough how to die.[119]

In the continuation of this discussion, which was less terse and more discontinuous than in my transcription of it, I came fully to understand Julie's maxims and the conduct that had scandalized me. It all had to do with the fact that, feeling that her condition was utterly desperate, her only thought was for doing away with the pointless and funereal apparatus with which the terror of the dying surrounds them; whether in order to distract us from our affliction, or to spare herself a dismaying spectacle that benefits no one. Death, she said, is so painful anyway! Why make it hideous as well? The efforts others waste trying to prolong their lives, I put into savoring mine to the very end: it only takes knowing how to decide; all the rest follows from that. Shall I turn my room into a hospital, a boring and disgusting place, whereas my last attention is to gather here all those I hold dear? if I allow stale air to stagnate here, the children will have to be kept out, or see their health jeopardized. If I remain attired fit to frighten, no one will recognize me any more; I will no longer be the same, you will all remember that you loved me, and will no longer be able to stand me. I will have before me, while still alive, the awful spectacle of the horror I inspire even in my friends, as if I were already dead. Instead of that, I have found the art of extending my life without prolonging it. I exist, I love, I am loved, I live till my last breath. The moment of death is nothing; the suffering that nature imposes is nothing much; those which opinion imposes I have banished.

All these discussions and others like them took place between the patient, the Pastor, sometimes the Doctor, Fanchon, and me. Madame d'Orbe was always present, and never took part. Attentive to her friend's needs,

she was quick to assist her. The rest of the time, immobile and nearly inanimate, she watched her without a word, and without hearing anything of what we were saying.

For my part, fearing Julie would talk to the point of exhaustion, I seized the moment when the Minister and the Doctor had begun to converse together, and drawing close to her, I said in her ear: That's a lot of talking for someone who is sick! That's a lot of reasoning for someone who always thinks she is not in a condition to reason!

Yes, she said in a low voice, I talk too much for someone who is sick but not for someone who is dying; soon I shall have no more to say. With respect to reasonings, I practice them no more, but I have in the past. I knew in health that I had to die. I have often reflected on my final illness; I take advantage today of my foresight. I am no longer in a condition to think nor to resolve; I am merely saying what I had thought, and practicing what I had resolved.[120]

The rest of the day, aside from a few incidents, went by in the same tranquillity, and almost in the same way as when everyone was well. Julie was, as in full health, gentle and caressing; she spoke with the same good sense, with the same freedom of spirit, even with a serene demeanor that sometimes went as far as gaiety. Besides, I continued to detect in her eyes a certain exhilaration that worried me more and more, and about which I resolved to ask her for an explanation.

I waited no later than that very evening. As she saw that I had arranged to speak alone with her, she said to me: You have anticipated me, I needed to talk to you. Very well, I said; but since I have made the first move, let me explain myself first.

Then after taking a seat beside her and looking straight in her eyes, I said to her: Julie, my dear Julie! you have cut me to the heart: alas, you waited until very late! Yes, I continued, seeing that she looked at me with surprise; I have figured you out; you are delighted to be dying; you are more than happy to be leaving me. Recall your Husband's conduct over the time we have lived together; have I deserved on your part such a cruel sentiment? She instantly took my hands, and in that tone of hers that went right to the soul: Who, me? I want to leave you? Is that the way you read my heart? Have you so soon forgotten our discussion of yesterday? And yet, I replied, you die content.... I have seen it.... I see it.... Enough, she said; it is true, I die content; but that is to die as I have lived, worthy of being your spouse. Do not ask more of me, I will tell you nothing further; but here, she continued, taking a paper from under her pillow, is where you will discover the full explanation of this mystery. This paper was a Letter, and I saw it was addressed to you. I give it to you open, she added as

she handed it to me, so that after reading it you may decide whether to send or suppress it, according to what you find most in keeping with your wisdom and my honor. I beg you not to read it until I am gone, and I am so sure of what you will do at my request that I do not even ask you to promise it. It is this Letter, dear St. Preux, that you will find enclosed herein. However much I know that she who wrote it is dead, I have difficulty believing there is nothing left of her.

She then talked to me about her father with much concern. What! she said, he knows his daughter is in danger, and I have no news of him! Could something terrible have happened to him? Could he have ceased to love me? What, my father!... that father so tender... abandon me thus!.... allow me to die without seeing him!.... without receiving his blessing.... his last embraces!.... O God! what bitter reproaches he will make himself when he no longer finds me!.... This reflection was painful to her. I surmised that she would more easily bear the thought of her father ill than of her father indifferent. I decided to confess the truth to her. Indeed, the alarm it gave her turned out to be less cruel than her first suspicions. Yet the thought of never seeing him again affected her intensely. Alas! she said, what will become of him without me? Who will he have? To outlive his whole family!....[121] What sort of life will he have? He will be alone; he will no longer be alive. That was one of those moments when the horror of death made itself felt, and when nature resumed its empire. She sighed, joined her hands together, lifted her eyes, and I saw that indeed she was invoking that difficult prayer which she had said was the prayer of the sick.[122]

She came back to me. I feel weak, she said; I foresee that this discussion could be the last one we will have together. In the name of our union, in the name of our dear children who are the tokens of it, cease being unjust with your spouse. I, rejoice at leaving you! You who have lived only to make me happy and virtuous; you of all men the one who suited me best; the only one, perhaps, with whom I could form a good couple, and become a good woman! Ah, take my word that if I placed a value on life, it was to spend it with you! These words spoken with tenderness moved me to such a point that, pressing often to my lips her hands which I held in mine, I felt them becoming wet with my tears. I did not believe my eyes were made to spill any. They were the first since my birth; they will be the last until my death. After shedding tears for Julie, one should no longer shed them for anything.

That day was a tiring day for her. The preparation of Madame d'Orbe during the night, the scene with the children in the morning, the one with the Minister in the afternoon, the evening's discussion with me had left her exhausted. She got a little more rest that night than the previous ones,

either because of her weakness, or because indeed the fever and its redoubling had lessened.

The next day in the morning they came to tell me that a shabbily dressed man was asking very insistently to see Madame in private. He had been told her condition, he had persisted, saying his business concerned a good deed, that he knew Madame de Wolmar well, and knew that as long as she breathed, she would like to do such ones as this. As she had established the inviolable rule never to turn anyone away, and especially the wretched, they told me about this man before sending him away. I sent for him. He was almost in rags, he looked and sounded like a wretch; aside from that, I saw nothing in his physiognomy and in his words that made me augur ill of him. He continued to insist on speaking with no one but Julie. I told him that if it was just a matter of some assistance to help keep him alive, without for that intruding on a woman at death's door, I would do what she could have done. No, he said, I am not asking for money, although I am in great need of such: I am asking for a possession that is mine, one I value higher than all the treasures on earth, one I have lost through my own fault, and which Madame alone, from whom I received it, can restore to me a second time.

These words, of which I understood nothing, nonetheless decided me. A dishonorable man could have said the same thing; but he would never have said it in that tone of voice. He demanded secrecy; neither lackey, nor chambermaid. These precautions seemed to me bizarre; all the same I took them. Finally I escorted him into her room. He had told me he was known to Madame d'Orbe; he passed in front of her; she did not recognize him, and I was hardly surprised at this. As for Julie, she recognized him in an instant, and seeing him in this sorry attire, she reproached me for leaving him that way. This recognition was moving. Claire aroused by the noise came closer and finally recognized him, not without also manifesting some signs of joy; but the expressions of her good heart waned from her deep affliction: a single sentiment absorbed everything; she was no longer sensible to anything.

I do not need, I think, to tell you who this man was. His presence recalled many memories. But as Julie was comforting him and giving him good hopes, she was seized with a violent suffocation and was so poorly that we thought she was about to expire. Not to make a scene, and to avoid distractions at a time when all that mattered was to help her, I had the man shown into the study, warning him to lock the door behind him; Fanchon was called in, and by dint of time and care the patient finally recovered from her fainting spell. Seeing us all stunned about her, she said to us: My children, this is only a trial: that is not as cruel as we think.

Calm returned; but it had been such a close call that it made me forget the man in the study, and when Julie asked me in a low voice what had become of him, the table was already set, everyone was there. I meant to go in and talk to him, but he had locked the door from the inside, as I had told him to do; we had to wait until after dinner to get him out.

During the meal, Du Bosson, who was there, while mentioning a young widow who was said to be remarrying, added something about the sorry fate of widows. There are some, I said, who are even more to be pitied; it is widows whose husbands are still alive. That is true, chimed in Fanchon who saw that these words were intended for her; especially when they cherish them. Then the discussion fell on hers, and as she had spoken of him affectionately at all times, it was natural for her to do so again at the moment when the loss of her benefactrix was about to make her own still more bitter. That is indeed what she did in very moving terms, praising his good natural disposition, deploring the bad examples that had lured him away, and regretting him so sincerely, that already disposed to sadness, she was moved to tears. All of a sudden the study opened, the man in rags bounded out, threw himself at her knees, kissed them, and melted in tears. She was holding a glass; it fell from her hand: Ah, poor man, where have you been? collapsed on him, and would have fainted away had they not been quick to aid her.

The rest is easy to imagine. In an instant everyone in the house learned that Claude Anet was back. Good Fanchon's husband! what a happy day! He was hardly outside the room before clothing was supplied. If every man had had just two shirts, Anet would have got just as many himself as all the others would have had left. When I went out to have him dressed, I found that I had been so well anticipated that I had to speak as master to make those who had provided him take it all back.

However Fanchon refused to leave her mistress's side. To make her grant a few hours to her husband, we invoked the children's need to take some fresh air, and both of them were commissioned to accompany them.

This scene did not inconvenience the patient, as had the previous ones; there had been nothing disagreeable about it, and it only did her good. Claire and I spent the afternoon alone with her, and we had two hours of a peaceful conversation, which she made into the most interesting, the most charming we had ever had.

She began with several remarks on the moving spectacle that had just made such an impression on us and that recalled so vividly to her the earliest times of her youth. Then following the thread of events, she briefly recapitulated her entire life to show that all in all it had been placid and fortunate, that from one step to the next she had risen to the epitome of hap-

piness permitted on earth, and that the accident that was ending her days in the midst of their course, in all appearance demarcated in her natural career the point of division between good things and evil.

She thanked Heaven for giving her a sensible heart and one inclined to the good, a sound understanding, a prepossessing visage, for having caused her to be born in a land of liberty and not among slaves, of an honorable family and not of a line of malefactors, into an honest fortune and not into the grandeurs of the world that corrupt the soul, or into the indigence that degrades it. She congratulated herself on being born of a father and mother both virtuous and good, full of rectitude and honor, and who moderating each other's shortcomings, had patterned her reason on theirs, without imparting to her their weakness or prejudices. She celebrated the advantage of being raised in a reasonable and holy religion which, far from making man into a brute, ennobles and uplifts him, which favoring neither impiety nor fanaticism, accommodates wisdom and belief, humanity and piety all at once.

After that, pressing her Cousin's hand which she held in her own, and looking at her with that eye you must know, which languor made even more touching: All these blessings, she said, have been granted a thousand others; but this one!.... heaven granted it only me. I was a woman, and a woman was my friend. It caused us to be born at the same time; it placed in our inclinations an accord that has never been belied; it made our hearts for each other, it united us from the crib, I have kept her my whole life long, and her hand closes my eyes. Find another example like it on earth, and I will no longer boast of anything. What wise counsel has she not given me? From what perils has she not saved me? For what ills did she not console me? What would I have been without her? What would she not have made of me, had I better heeded her? I would perhaps be her equal today! Claire for sole reply lowered her head on her friend's bosom, and wanted to relieve her sobs with tears: it was not possible. Julie long held her silently to her breast. For such moments there are neither words nor tears.

They collected themselves, and Julie continued: These blessings were mixed with liabilities; this is the fate of things human. My heart was made for love, discriminating with regard to personal merit, indifferent to the values of opinion. It was almost excluded that my father's prejudices should accord with my penchant. I had to have a lover of my own choosing. He came forward; I thought it was I who chose him: doubtless it was Heaven that chose him for me, in order that, a prey to the errors of my passion, I should not succumb to the horrors of crime,[123] and that the love of virtue at least should remain in my soul after virtue itself. He adopted

the honest and insinuating language with which a thousand knaves seduce every day just as many well-born daughters: but alone among so many others he was an honorable man and believed what he said. Was it my prudence that had picked him out? No; at first all I knew of him was his language and I was seduced. I did out of despair what others do out of effrontery: I threw myself, as my father said, at him; he respected me. It was only then that I came to know him. Any man capable of such a feat has a beautiful soul. At that point he can be depended upon; but I depended on him prior to that, subsequently I dared to depend on myself, and that is how one is undone.

She expatiated fondly on this lover's merit; she did him justice, but it was evident how much pleasure it gave her heart to do so. She praised him even at her own expense. She went so far to be equitable toward him that she was wholly unfair to herself, and did herself wrong in order to do him honor. She went so far as to maintain that he was more horrified than she by adultery, forgetting that he himself had refuted this.

All the remaining details of her life were pursued in the same spirit. Milord Edward, her husband, her children, your return, our friendship, everything was put in a flattering light. Even her misfortunes had spared her greater ones. She had lost her mother at the moment when this loss could be the most cruel to her, but had Heaven preserved her, there would soon have been disorder in her family. Her mother's support, weak as it was, would have sufficed to make her more courageous for resisting her father, and from thence would have arisen discord and scandals; perhaps disasters and dishonor; perhaps worse yet had her brother lived. She had married against her will a man she did not love, but she maintained that she could never have been equally happy with another, not even with the one she had loved. The death of Monsieur d'Orbe had deprived her of a friend in the husband, but restored her a friend in the wife. Her very sorrows and pains she counted as assets, insofar as they had prevented her heart from hardening to others' sufferings. People do not know, she said, what satisfaction there is in weeping over one's own sufferings and those of others.[124] Sensibility always brings to the soul a certain self-contentment independent of fortune and events. How I have wailed! what tears I have shed! And yet, if I had to be reborn under the same conditions, the evil I have committed would be the only one I would wish to retrench: the evil I have suffered I would still accept. St. Preux, I render you her very words; once you have read her letter, perhaps you will understand them better.

So you see, she continued, what felicity I have attained. Much I had; I could anticipate more. My family's prosperity, a good education for my children, all those I cherished gathered about me or soon to be. The pres-

ent and future alike gratified me; possession and hope joined together to make me happy: my happiness rising by degrees was complete, it could henceforth only decline; it came without my expecting it, it would have fled when I thought it would last. What would fate have done to sustain me at this point? Is a permanent state made for man? No, when one has acquired everything, one must sustain losses; were it only the pleasure of possession, which wears down with possession. My father is already old; my children are at the tender age when life is still ill-assured: what losses might afflict me, while nothing remains for me to acquire! A mother's affection constantly grows, children's tenderness diminishes as they live progressively farther from their mother. As they advanced in years, mine would have distanced themselves farther from me. They would have lived in the world; they might have neglected me. You mean to send one of them to Russia; what tears his departure would have cost me! Everyone would little by little have taken leave of me, and nothing would have compensated for my losses. How many times might I have found myself in the situation in which I am leaving you! Finally would I not have had to die? Perhaps die last of all? Perhaps alone and abandoned? The longer one lives, the more one loves life, even if nothing in it can be enjoyed: I would have had the weariness of life and the terror of death, the usual consequence of old age. Instead of that, my last moments are still pleasant, and I have vigor enough for dying; if indeed one can call it dying, to leave those one loves still alive. No my friends, no my children, I am not leaving you, so to speak; I remain with you; by leaving you all united my spirit, my heart stay with you.[125] You will see me constantly among you; you will feel yourselves constantly surrounded by me... And later, we shall meet again, I am sure of that; the good Wolmar himself will not escape me. My return to God brings peace to my soul, and makes a painful moment easier for me; it assures me that your destiny shall be the same as mine. My portion goes with me and becomes settled. I was happy, I am happy, I am going to be happy: my happiness is fixed, I snatch it from fortune; it has no more confines but eternity.

She was at this point when the Minister entered. He genuinely revered and esteemed her. He knew better than anyone how living and sincere was her faith. He had been only the more impressed by the previous day's conversation, and in all, by the front he had seen her sustain. He had often seen people die ostentatiously, never serenely. Perhaps there was joined to the interest he took in her a secret desire to see whether this calm would be maintained till the end.

She did not need to change the subject of discussion much to bring in one suitable to the character of the newcomer. As her conversations in full

health were never frivolous, all she was doing then was to continue to treat in her bed with the same tranquillity subjects of interest to her and to her friends; she debated with indifference questions that were not indifferent.

Following the thread of her notions about what part of her would remain with us, she spoke to us of her earlier reflections on the state of souls separated from bodies. She wondered at the simplicity of people who promised their friends they would bring them news of the afterlife. That, she said, is as reasonable as the Ghost stories that wreak a thousand disorders and torment crones, as if spirits had voices to speak and hands to applaud!*[126] How could a pure Spirit act on a soul enclosed in a body, and which, by virtue of this union, can perceive nothing except by the mediation of its organs? That makes no sense. But I admit that I fail to see what is absurd about supposing that a soul free from a body that once inhabited the earth could return there, roam about, tarry perhaps near those it cherished; not to alert us to its presence; it has no means of doing that; not to act upon us and communicate its thoughts to us: it has no purchase for stimulating the organs of our brain; nor to look in on what we are doing, for it would have to possess senses; but to learn for itself what we are thinking and feeling, through a direct communication, comparable to that by which God reads our thoughts even in this life, and by which we shall in turn read his in the next, since we shall see him face to face.** For after all, she added, looking at the Minister, what use would senses be once there is nothing more for them to do? The eternal Being is neither seen nor heard; it makes itself felt; it speaks neither to the eyes nor the ears, but to the heart.[127]

I understood from the pastor's reply and from a few signs of connivance, that one of the points previously contested between them was the resurrection of bodies. I perceived as well that I was beginning to pay a little more attention to those articles of Julie's religion in which faith converged upon reason.

She delighted so in these thoughts that had she not made up her mind about her earlier opinions, it would have been cruel to destroy one that seemed so comforting to her in her condition then. A hundred times, she said, I have derived more pleasure to perform some good work by imagin-

* Plato says that at death the souls of the just who have not contracted any corruption on earth, break free in all their purity from matter by themselves. As for those who have enslaved themselves to their passions here below, he adds that their souls do not immediately regain their primitive purity, but drag behind them earthly parts which hold them as if enchained about the remnants of their bodies; this, he says, is what produces those visible simulacra one sometimes beholds roaming in cemeteries, while awaiting new transmigrations. It is a mania common to philosophers of all eras to deny what is, and to explain what is not.

** This seems to me very well said: for what is it to see God face to face, if not to read into the supreme intelligence?

ing my mother present, reading what is in her daughter's heart and applauding. There is something so consoling about continuing to live under the eyes of one we cherished! Thus for us he dies only by half. You can gauge whether in the course of this discussion Claire's hand was often pressed.

Although the Pastor replied to all this with great gentleness and moderation, and even affected not to object to anything she said, for fear his silence on other points be taken as approval, he did not cease one instant being an Ecclesiastic, and propounded an opposite doctrine concerning the afterlife. He said that the immensity, the glory, and the attributes of God would be the sole object with which the souls of the blessed would be occupied, that this sublime contemplation would erase every other memory, that we would not see each other, that we would not recognize each other, even in Heaven, and that at this ravishing sight we would no longer be mindful of anything terrestrial.

That may be, replied Julie, it is so far from the lowliness of our thoughts to the divine essence, that we cannot have a notion of the effects it will have on us when we shall be in a condition to behold it. Nonetheless being able to reason now only upon my ideas, I confess that I feel affections so dear that it would distress me to think I will no longer have them. I have even put together a sort of argument that flatters my hope. I tell myself that part of my happiness will consist in the testimony of a good conscience. I shall thus remember what I have done on earth; I shall thus also remember the people who have been dear to me here; I shall thus cherish them still: to see them*[128] no more would be a torment, and the abode of the blessed admits of none. Moreover, she added, looking at the Minister in a rather cheerful manner, if I am mistaken, a day or two of error will soon be past. Shortly I will know more about this than you yourself. In the meantime, what is very sure for me is that as long as I shall remember that I have lived on earth, I will love those I loved here, and my pastor will not have the lowest place.[129]

Thus were spent the conversations of that day, in which the security, the hope, the peace of the soul shone more than ever in Julie's, and afforded her in advance, in the Minister's judgment, the peace of the blessed whose number she was about to increase. Never was she more tender, more true, more caressing, more lovable, in a word, more herself. Ever good sense, ever sentiment, ever the steadfastness of the wise, and ever the meekness of

* It is easy to understand that by this word *see* she means a pure act of the understanding, similar to that by which God sees us and by which we shall see God. The senses cannot imagine the immediate communication of spirits; but reason conceives it very well, and better, it seems to me, than the communication of movement between bodies.

the Christian. No pretension, no artifice, no sententiousness; throughout, the naive expression of what she felt; throughout, the simplicity of her heart. Though she sometimes stifled the moans that suffering should have wrested from her, it was not in order to affect stoic intrepidity, it was for fear of grieving those around her; and when the horrors of death momentarily overpowered nature, she did not conceal her fright, she allowed herself to be comforted. The minute she was herself again, she comforted the others. One saw, one felt her renewed presence, her gentle manner proclaimed it to all. Her cheerfulness was not constrained, even her jesting itself was touching; we had a smile on our lips and tears in our eyes.[130] If you take away that dread that prevents our savoring what we are about to lose, she was more pleasing, she was more lovable even than in health; and the last day of her life was also its most enchanting.

Toward evening she had another episode which, although less grave than the morning's, did not allow her to see her children for long. However she noticed that Henriette was changed; they told her she wept a good deal and was not eating. She can't be cured of that, she said, looking at Claire; the disease is in the blood.

Feeling herself much better, she wanted us to have supper in her room. The Doctor was present as he had been that morning. Fanchon, who had always to be notified when she was to come eat at our table, came that evening without waiting to be sent for. Julie noticed this and smiled. Yes, my child, she said to her, sup once more with me this evening; you will have your husband longer than your mistress. Then she said to me: I do not need to commend Claude Anet to you; No, I replied, anyone you have honored with your benevolence has no need of being commended to me.

The supper was even more agreeable than I had expected. Julie, seeing that she could bear the light, had them move the table forward, and, inconceivable as it seemed in her condition, she had an appetite. The Doctor, who saw no reason not to satisfy it, offered her a chicken breast; No, she said, but I wouldn't mind some of this Ferra.*[131] She was given a small morsel of it; she ate it with a little bread and found it good. While she was eating, you should have seen Madame d'Orbe watching her; you had to see it, for it cannot be described. Far from what she ate doing her harm, she seemed to feel better for the remainder of the supper. She even found herself in such good humor that the idea came to her to point out as a sort of reproach that I had not for a long time drunk any foreign wine. Serve, she said, a bottle of Spanish wine to these Gentlemen. By the Doctor's face she saw that he expected to drink some real Spanish wine, and smiled

* An excellent fish particular to Lake Geneva, found only at certain times.

again, looking at her Cousin. I also perceived that, without paying attention to any of that, Claire for her part was beginning to raise her eyes from time to time with some agitation, sometimes toward Julie and sometimes toward Fanchon to whom these eyes seemed to say or ask something.

The wine was some time in coming. They looked in vain for the key to the cellar, it could not be found, and they surmised, as was true, that the Baron's Valet, who was in charge of it, had taken it off with him inadvertently. After some further inquiry, it became clear that a single day's provision had lasted for five days, and that we were out of wine without anyone's noticing it, despite the fact that there had been several nights' vigil.*[132] The Doctor was incredulous. For my part, whether it was attributable to the Domestics' sadness or sobriety, I was ashamed to be applying ordinary precautions with such servants. I had the door of the cellar caved in, and I gave orders that henceforth everyone should have wine ad libitum.

When the bottle had come, we drank some. The wine was declared excellent. The patient desired some. She asked for a spoonful of it with water: the Doctor gave it to her in a glass and intended she should drink it undiluted. Here Claire and Fanchon began to exchange more frequent glances; but more or less furtively and ever fearing to reveal too much.

Julie's fast, her weakness, her ordinary diet gave the wine considerable potency. Ah! she said, you have made me tipsy! after waiting so late it was hardly worth starting, for a drunken woman is a most odious sight. Indeed, she began to chatter, very cogently however, as was her wont, but more rapidly than before. What was astonishing was that her complexion was not at all flushed; her eyes shone only with a flame tempered by the languor of the illness; except for her pallor you would have thought her in good health. From that point on, Claire's emotion became altogether visible. She raised a fearful eye alternatively toward Julie, toward me, toward Fanchon, but principally toward the Doctor: all these glances were so many interrogations that she wanted to but dared not make. You would have thought she was constantly about to speak, but that fear of the wrong reply held her back; her anxiety was so keen that she seemed oppressed by it.

Fanchon, emboldened by all these signs, hazarded to say, but trembling and in a muted voice, that it seemed Madame had suffered a bit less today;.... that the last convulsion had been less strong;... that the evening... she stopped speechless. And Claire, who while she had spoken trembled like a leaf, lifted fearful eyes toward the Doctor, her eyes fixed on his, her

* Readers with handsome lackeys, do not ask with mocking laughter where they found these servants. You have been answered in advance: they were not found, they were made. The whole problem turns on a single point. Simply find Julie, and all the rest is found. Men in general are not this or that, they are what they are made to be.

ear attentive, and daring not breathe, for fear of not hearing correctly what he was going to say.

It would have been stupidity not to understand what all this meant. Du Bosson rose, went to take the patient's pulse, and said: There are no signs of inebriation, or fever; the pulse is quite good. Instantly Claire cried out, half extending her two arms: Well then Monsieur!... the pulse?... the fever?.... her voice faltered; but her spread hands remained before her; her eyes sparkled with impatience; there was not a muscle of her face that was not mobile. The Doctor did not reply, took hold of her wrist again, examined her eyes, her tongue, remained pensive for a moment, and said: Madame, I hear you all right. At the moment it is impossible for me to speak with any certainty; but if at this hour tomorrow morning she is still in the same condition, I answer for her life. At this word, Claire started like a flash, overturned two chairs and almost the table too, leapt to hug the Doctor, embraced him, kissed him a thousand times sobbing and weeping hot tears, and ever with the same impetuosity took a costly ring from her finger, put it on his against his will, and said to him breathlessly: Ah Monsieur! if you restore her to us, you will not save her alone.

Julie saw all this. This scene devastated her. She looked at her friend, and said to her in a tender and grievous voice: Ah cruel Cousin! how you make me regret leaving this life! would you have me die in despair? Shall I have to prepare you twice? These few words were a lightening bolt; it promptly dampened the transports of joy; but it could not completely stifle the reviving hope.

In a flash the Doctor's reply was known throughout the house. Those simple folk already believed their mistress restored. They resolved in a single voice to offer the Doctor, if she recovered, a collective present for which each offered three months' wages, and the money was deposited on the spot in Fanchon's hands, the ones lending to the others the money they were short to do so. This agreement was reached with such excitement that Julie heard from her bed the sound of their acclamations. Imagine its effect, in the heart of a woman who feels herself dying! She gestured to me, and said in my ear: I have been made to drink to the dregs the bittersweet cup of sensibility.[133]

When it was time to withdraw, Madame d'Orbe, who shared her Cousin's bed as in the two previous nights, sent for her chambermaid to spell Fanchon for the night; but she took offense at this proposal, even more, it seemed to me, than she would have if her husband had not returned. Madame d'Orbe too was adamant, and the two chambermaids spent the night together in the study. I spent it in the next room, and hope had so rekindled zeal that with neither orders nor threats could I send a

single domestic off to bed. Thus the whole household stayed up that night in such impatience that few of its inhabitants would not have given a good part of their lives for it to be nine o'clock in the morning.

During the night I heard a few comings and goings that did not alarm me: but toward dawn when all was calm, a dull sound struck my ear. I listened, I thought I could make out moans. I ran to the room, entered, opened the curtain.... St. Preux!.... dear St. Preux!.... I saw the two friends motionless, locked in each other's embrace; the one in a faint, and the other expiring. I uttered a cry, I wanted to delay or attend her last breath, I hastened. She was no more.[134]

O you who worship God, Julie was no more..... You will not hear from me what transpired over the next few hours. I myself do not know what became of me. Once I recovered from the initial shock I inquired after Madame d'Orbe. I learned that she had to be carried to her room, and even locked in: for at every moment she returned to Julie's, threw herself upon her body, warmed it with hers, endeavored to revive it, pressed it, clung to it in a sort of rage, called it loudly by a thousand passionate names, and sated her despair with all these pointless efforts.

When I entered, I found her completely out of her mind, seeing nothing, hearing nothing, recognizing no one, rolling around on the floor wringing her hands and biting the legs of the chairs, murmuring some extravagant words in a muted voice, then at long intervals uttering piercing cries that made one start. The chambermaid at the foot of her bed consternated, terrified, motionless, daring not breathe, was trying to hide from her, and trembled from head to foot. Indeed, the convulsions with which she was seized were something frightening. I gestured to the chambermaid to withdraw; for I feared lest a single word of consolation untimely proffered send her into a rage.

I did not attempt to speak to her; she would not have listened to me, nor even heard me; but after some while seeing she was exhausted with fatigue, I took her and carried her to an armchair. I sat down by her side, holding her hands in mine; I ordered that the children be brought in, and had them stand around her. Unfortunately, the first one she spied was precisely the innocent cause of her friend's death. This sight made her shudder. I saw her features distort, I saw her eyes avert him with a sort of horror, and her arms contract and stiffen to push him away. I drew the child to me. My poor boy! I said to him, because you were too dear to the one you become odious to the other; they were not of one heart in everything. These words provoked her violently and drew some very sharp words upon me. Nonetheless they did not fail to make an impression. She took the

child in her arms and attempted to caress him; it was in vain; she gave him back almost at once. She even continues to see him with less pleasure than the other, and I am very glad it is not he whom we have destined for her daughter.

What would you, sensible people, have done in my place? What Madame d'Orbe was doing. After seeing to the children, to Madame d'Orbe, to the funeral of the only person I have loved, I had to mount up and ride off to carry the death I bore in my heart to the most pitiable father. I found him suffering from his fall, in a state of agitation, shaken by his daughter's accident. I left him crushed with sorrow, with that sorrow of the aged, which is imperceptible on the outside, provokes neither gestures nor cries, but kills. He will not survive it, I am sure, and I foresee from afar the last blow to complete his friend's misfortune. The next day I rode with utmost diligence to be back early and pay my last respects to the most worthy of wives. But the last word was not yet spoken. She had to arise from the dead, to inflict on me the horror of losing her a second time.

As I neared the house, I saw one of my servants running toward me breathlessly, and crying out from as far as I could hear him: Monsieur, Monsieur, come quickly; Madame is not dead. I could make nothing of these insane words: nonetheless I came running. I found the courtyard filled with people shedding tears of joy and bestowing boisterous blessings on Madame de Wolmar. I asked what it was all about; they were all beside themselves, no one could answer me: my own servants had gone berserk. I rushed upstairs to Julie's rooms. I found more than twenty persons kneeling about the bed, with their eyes fixed on her. I came closer; I saw her lying on the bed and dressed in finery; my heart was pounding; I examined her..... Alas, she was dead! That moment of false joy so quickly and so cruelly snuffed out was the bitterest of my life. I am not an angry sort: I felt intensely irritated. I wanted to get to the bottom of this extravagant scene. Everything was disguised, distorted, altered; I had all the difficulty in the world getting at the truth. Finally I succeeded, and here is the story of the marvel.

My father-in-law, alarmed by the accident he had learned about, and thinking he could get along without his Valet, had dispatched him to obtain news of his daughter soon before my arrival there. The elderly domestic, weary of riding, had taken a boat, and by crossing the lake during the night had reached Clarens the very morning of my return. Upon arrival he saw the consternation, he learnt its subject, he went up grieving to Julie's room; he kneeled at the foot of her bed, looked at her, wept, gazed at her. Ah, my good mistress! ah, why did God not take me instead of you! I who

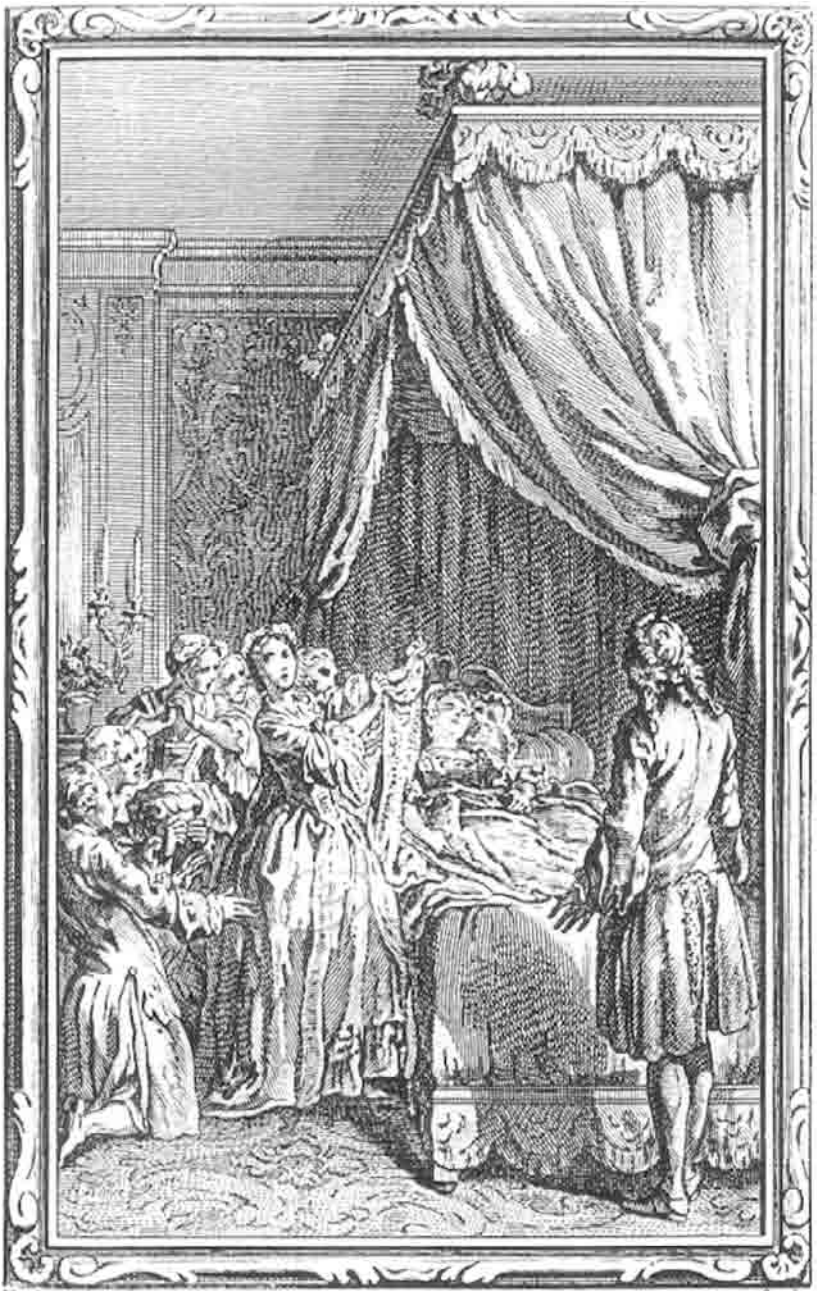
am old, who have no one left, who am good for nothing, what am I doing on this earth? And you who were young, who were the glory of your family, the happiness of your household, the hope of the wretched;.... alas when I was present at your birth, was it to be present at your death?....

Amidst the exclamations his zeal and good heart wrested from him, his eyes still glued to that face, he thought he perceived a movement: his imagination took flight; he saw Julie turn her eyes, look at him, nod to him. He arose transported and ran about the house, crying out that madame was not dead, that she had recognized him, that he was sure of it, that she was going to recover. It took no more than that; everyone came running, the neighbors, the poor whose lamentations rang in the air, they all exclaimed, she is not dead! The rumor spread and grew: the populace fond of the supernatural avidly took up the news; they believed it as they desired it; every man sought to celebrate by contributing to the general credulity. Soon the departed had not merely gestured, she had acted, she had spoken, and there were twenty eyewitnesses to detailed facts that never took place.

As soon as they thought she was still alive, they made a thousand attempts to revive her; they crowded about her, spoke to her, drenched her in spirits, checked whether the pulse was not returning. Her womenservants, indignant at their mistress's body lying surrounded by men in such indecent attire, made everyone leave, and were not long in discovering how deluded everyone was. Nonetheless unable to resign themselves to shattering such an appealing error; perhaps still hoping themselves for some miraculous event, they robed the body with care, and although her wardrobe had been left to them, they lavished finery upon her. Then laying her out on a bed and leaving the curtains open, they again began to mourn her amidst the public joy.

I had arrived at the height of this fermentation. I soon recognized that it was impossible to talk reason to the multitude, that if I had the door closed and the body borne to the grave a tumult might ensue, that I would at the least pass for a parricidal husband[135] who was having his wife buried alive, and that I would be held in horror by the whole countryside. I resolved to wait. However after more than thirty-six hours, given the exceedingly hot weather, the flesh was beginning to decompose, and although the face had retained its features and its sweetness, one already saw some signs of alteration. I pointed this out to Madame d'Orbe who stayed half-dead by the bedside. She had not the benefit of being the dupe of an illusion so crass; but she feigned to lend herself to it since it gave her a pretext for being continually in the room, agonizing to her heart's content, feasting it on this deathly spectacle, gorging her grief.

She understood my meaning, and determining without a word what



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Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University.

was to be done, she left the room. I saw her return a moment later holding a golden veil embroidered with pearls which you had brought her from the Indies.* Then coming over to the bed, she kissed the veil, covered her friend's face with it, weeping, and exclaimed in a clarion voice: "Cursèd be the wretched hand that ever lifts this veil! cursèd be the sacrilegious eye that ever looks on this disfigured face!"[136] This act, these words so struck the onlookers that instantly as if by a sudden inspiration the same imprecation was repeated by a thousand cries. It made such an impression on all our servants and especially on the populace, that the departed having been placed into the coffin still clothed[137] and with the greatest precautions, she was taken off and buried in this state, without anyone having been brazen enough to touch the veil.**

The lot of the person who is most to be pitied is to have also to comfort the others. That is what remains for me to do with respect to my father-in-law, to Madame d'Orbe, to friends, to relatives, to neighbors, and to my own servants. The others are easy; but my aged friend! but Madame d'Orbe! Her affliction has to be seen to gauge how much it adds to mine. Far from thanking me for my ministries, she reproaches me for them; my attentions irritate her, my cold sorrow angers her; she requires bitter regrets like her own, and her cruel grief would have everyone be in despair. The most dismaying thing is that one cannot be sure of anything with her, and what relieves her one minute riles her a minute later. Everything she does, everything she says verges on madness, and would be laughable to disinterested observers. I have much to endure; I shall never lose courage. By assisting those whom Julie loved, I feel I honor her better than with tears.

A single instance will give you an idea of the others. I thought I had done what was necessary by prevailing on Claire to preserve herself so as to discharge the responsibilities her friend assigned to her. Exhausted by agitations, by continual abstinence, by lack of sleep, she seemed finally resigned to altering her attitude, resuming her everyday life, taking her meals in the dining room again. The first time she came I had the children's dinner served in their room, not wishing to run the risk of this trial in their presence: for the spectacle of violent passions of all kinds is one of the most dangerous one can put before children. There is always something puerile about these passions in their excesses that entertains them,

* It can easily be seen that it is St. Preux's dream, with which Madame d'Orbe's imagination was constantly filled, that suggests to her the expedient of this veil. I believe that if we were to examine the matter closely, we would find this same relationship in the fulfillment of many predictions. The event is not predicted because it will happen; but it happens because it has been predicted.

** The people of the Pays de Vaud, although Protestant, continue to be extremely superstitious.

seduces them, and makes them like what they should fear.* They had already seen only too much of that.

Upon entering, she cast a glance at the table and saw two settings. Instantly she sat down on the first chair she found behind her, refusing to take a place at table or say the reason for this caprice. I thought I divined her, and had a third place set where her Cousin usually sat. Then she allowed herself to be taken by the hand and led to the table without resisting, tucking her dress under with care, as if she had feared to intrude upon that empty place. She had no sooner raised the first spoonful of soup to her lips than she set it down, and asked gruffly what that third place setting was doing there, since it was unoccupied? I told her she was right, and had the setting taken away. She tried to eat, but never managed to do so. Little by little her heart began to heave, her breathing became audible and resembled sighs. Finally she arose suddenly from the table, returned to her room without uttering a single word or listening to a thing I wanted to tell her, and for the entire day she took nothing but tea.

The next day it had to be tried again. I thought up a means of bringing her back to reason through her own caprices, and alleviating the harshness of despair by means of a more comforting sentiment. You know that her daughter looks a great deal like Madame de Wolmar. She enjoyed underscoring this resemblance with dresses of the same fabric, and she had brought them several like dresses from Geneva, which they donned the same days. I therefore had Henriette dressed as much as possible in imitation of Julie, and after instructing her carefully, I had her take the third place at table, which had been set as the day before.

Claire understood my intention at the first glance; she was touched by it; she gave me a tender and obliging look. That was the first of my attentions she seemed to appreciate, and I augured well for an expedient which induced some emotion in her.

Henriette, proud of representing her petite-Maman, played her role perfectly, and so perfectly that I saw the domestics weep. At the same time she always gave her mother the name of Maman, and spoke to her with proper respect. But emboldened by success, and by my approval which she clearly noticed, she took it into her head to reach for a spoon and quip: Claire, would you like some of this? The gesture and tone of voice were mimicked so well that it made her mother quiver. An instant later she let loose a great clap of laughter, held out her plate saying: Yes my child, give me some; you are charming: and then she began to eat with a voracity that surprised me. Studying her closely, I saw distraction in her eyes, and in her gesture a jerkier and more deliberate movement than usual. I refused to let

* That is why we all like the theater, and quite a few of us novels.

her go on eating, and did the right thing; for an hour later she had a violent indigestion that would infallibly have choked her had she continued eating. From this moment, I resolved to put an end to all this pretending, which could enflame her imagination to the point where it could no longer be controlled. Since grief is more easily cured than madness, it is better to let her suffer longer, and not jeopardize her reason.

That, my dear man, is more or less where we are now. Since the Baron's return, Claire goes up to his room every morning, either while I am there, or when I leave; they spend an hour or two together, and the care she takes of him somewhat facilitates the care we take of her. Moreover, she is beginning to devote more time to the children. One of the three has been ill, precisely the one she loves the least. That accident has made her sense that she can incur further losses, and restored the zeal for her duties. With all that, she has not yet reached the point of sadness; the tears do not yet flow; to shed them she is awaiting you; it is for you to wipe them. You surely understand what I mean. Think about Julie's last counsel; it came first from me, and I think it more than ever useful and wise. Come unite with all that remains of her. Her father, her friend, her husband, her children, all await you, all desire you, they all feel you are needed. In a word, without explaining myself further, come share and heal my sorrows; I shall perhaps owe you more than anyone.

LETTER XII

From Julie

This Letter was enclosed in the previous one

We must abandon our plans. All is changed, my good friend; let us suffer this change without murmur; it comes from a wiser hand than ours. We were planning to reunite: this reunion was not good. It is a blessing that Heaven has prevented it; it is no doubt preventing calamities.

I have long deluded myself. That delusion for me was salutary; it collapses at the moment when I no longer need it. You have believed I was cured, and I thought I was. Let us give thanks to him who made this error last for as long as it was useful; who knows whether seeing myself so near the abyss, I would not have been drawn into it? Aye, however much I wanted to stifle the first sentiment that brought me alive, it crystallized into my heart. There it awakens at the moment when it is no longer to be feared; it sustains me when my strength fails me; it revives me as I lie dying. My friend, I make this confession without shame; this sentiment which subsisted despite me was involuntary, it has cost my innocence

nothing; everything within the power of my will was for my duty. If the heart, which is not in its power, was for you, that was a torment for me and not a crime. I have done what duty required; virtue remains to me without spot, and love has remained to me without remorse.

I dare pride myself on the past; but who could have answered to me for the future? One day more, perhaps, and I was criminal! How about a whole life spent with you? What dangers I have run unawares! to what greater dangers was I to be exposed! No doubt I felt for myself the perils I thought I was feeling for you.[138] All the trials have been weathered, but they could return. Have I not lived long enough for happiness and for virtue? What else that is useful remained for me to extract from life? In taking it from me Heaven takes nothing worth regretting, and places my honor in safety. My friend, I go at the propitious moment; contented with you and with myself; I go joyfully, and there is nothing cruel in this departure. After so many sacrifices I count for little the one left for me to make: it is merely to die one more time.

I foresee your affliction, I feel it: you are left to be pitied, I know it too well; and the intuition of your grief is the greatest pain I take with me; but see also what consolations I leave you! See how the obligations you must discharge toward her whom you cherished makes it your duty to preserve yourself for her![139] You still have her to serve in the better part of herself. You lose of Julie only what you have long since lost. All that was best in her you still have. Come rejoin her family. May her heart remain in your midst. May all those she loved gather together to confer on her a new being. Your cares, your pleasures, your friendship, all will be her doing. The bond of your union fashioned by her will bring her to life again; she will die only with the last survivor.

Remember that you still have another Julie and do not forget what you owe her. Each of you is about to lose half of his life; unite together to preserve the other half; this is the only means you both still have to survive me, by serving my family and my children. Would I could invent even closer ties to unite those who are dear to me! How dear you also should be to each other! How this thought should redouble your mutual attachment! Your objections to this engagement are now to become fresh reasons for entering into it. How will you ever be able to talk to each other about me without together being stirred? No: Claire and Julie will be so thoroughly alloyed that it will no longer be possible for your heart to separate them. Hers will reciprocate to you everything you have felt for her friend, she will be its confidante and its object: you will be happy through her whom you still have, without ceasing to be faithful to her whom you have lost, and after so many regrets and sorrows, before the time for living

and loving is past, you will have burned with a legitimate flame and savored an innocent happiness.

Within this chaste bond you will be able without distractions or fears to occupy yourself with the cares I leave to you, and after which you will no longer be hard-pressed to say what good you have done here below. As you know, there is a man worthy of the happiness to which he knows not how to aspire. This man is your liberator, the husband of the friend he restored to you. Alone, lacking interest in life, lacking expectation for the one that comes after, lacking pleasure, consolation, hope, he will soon be the most unfortunate of mortals. You owe him the care he has taken of you, and you know what can make it useful to him. Remember my previous letter. Spend your days with him. Let none who loved me leave him. He has restored to you the zest for virtue, show him its end and reward. Be a Christian to persuade him to become one. Victory is perhaps nearer than you think: he has done his duty, I will do mine; do yours. God is just; my confidence will not betray me.

I have only one thing to tell you about my children. I know what labors their education is going to cost you: but I also know full well that you will not find those labors onerous. In the discouraging moments indissociable from this function, say to yourself, they are Julie's children; all the effort will go away. Monsieur de Wolmar will turn over to you the observations I have made concerning your memoir and my two sons' character. This writing is scarcely begun: I do not impose it as rule, I submit it to your judgment. Do not make scholars of them, make them into charitable and just men. Tell them sometimes about their mother... you know whether they were dear to her.... tell Marcellin that I did not regret dying for him. Tell his brother that it was for him I loved life. Tell them.... I feel weary. I must end this Letter. In leaving my children to you, I relinquish them with less sorrow; it is like remaining with them.

Farewell, farewell, my sweet friend..... Alas! I end my life as I began it. I say too much, perhaps, at this moment when the heart no longer dissembles a thing... Ah why should I shrink from expressing all that I feel? It is no longer I who speak to thee; I am already in death's embrace. When thou seest this Letter, worms will gnaw thy lover's face, and her heart where thou shalt no longer dwell. But would my soul exist without thee, without thee what felicity should I enjoy? Nay, I leave thee not, I go to await thee. The virtue that separated us on earth shall unite us in the eternal abode. I die in this flattering expectation. Only too happy to pay with my life the right to love thee still without crime, and to tell thee so one more time.

LETTER XIII
From Madame d'Orbe

I am told that you are beginning to recover sufficiently for us to hope we may soon see you here. You must, my friend, attempt to overcome your weakness; you must try to cross the mountains before winter finally closes them to you. You will find in this country the air you need; you will see here nothing but grief and sorrow, and perhaps the general affliction will provide relief for your own. Mine has need of you in order to vent itself. By myself I can neither weep, nor speak, nor make myself understood. Wolmar understands me and does not answer. The grief of an unfortunate father turns inward; he cannot imagine a crueller one; he can neither see nor feel it: old men can no longer let themselves go. My children move me and know not how to be moved. I am alone amidst everyone. A dull silence surrounds me. In my listless dejection I no longer communicate with anyone. I have just enough strength and life to feel the horrors of death. O come, you who share my loss! Come share my grief: come nourish my heart with your regrets; come flood it with your tears. That is the only comfort I can hope for; it is the only pleasure I have left to enjoy.

But before you get here, and before I learn your view on a proposition of which I know you have been apprised, it is well that you know mine in advance. I am simple and direct; I mean to conceal nothing from you. I have felt love for you, I confess; perhaps I still do; perhaps I always will; I neither know nor wish to know. This is known, I am aware of that; I am neither put off nor concerned by it. But here is what I have to tell you and what you must be sure to remember. It is this: a man who was loved by Julie d'Étange, and could bring himself to marry another, is in my sight nothing but a knave and a scoundrel, whom I would deem myself dishonored to own for my friend; and as for me, I declare to you that any man, whoever he may be, who henceforth dares mentions love to me, will never mention it again in his life.

Remember the cares that await you, remember the duties that fall to you, remember her to whom you promised them. Her children are growing and developing, her father is imperceptibly wasting away; her husband worries and fidgets; try as he may, he cannot believe she is obliterated; his heart, in spite of him, revolts against his vain reason. He talks about her, he talks to her, he sighs. I believe I am already witnessing the accomplishment of the wishes she so often expressed, and it is for you to complete this great task.[140] What motives to attract both of you here! It is entirely worthy of

the generous Edward that our misfortunes should not have caused him to change his resolution.

Come then, dear and respectable friends, come join with what remains of her. Let us gather together all those who were dear to her. May her spirit inspire us: may her heart unite all of ours; let us live continually under her eyes. I like to believe that from the place where she dwells, from the abode of eternal peace, it pleases that still loving and sensible soul to return among us, to find her friends filled with her memory, to see them imitate her virtues, to hear herself honored by them, to feel them embrace her tomb, and moan as they utter her name. No, she has not departed these premises which she made so charming to us. They are still quite full of her. I see her in every object, I feel her at every step, at every moment of the day I hear the strains of her voice. This is where she lived; this is where her remains lie.... half her remains. Twice a week, on the way to the Temple.... I behold... I behold the sad and venerable place.... beauty, such is then thy last sanctuary!.... confidence, friendship, virtues, pleasures, frolics, the earth has swallowed all.... I feel myself drawn.... I approach in a quiver.... I fear to tread on this sacred ground.... I seem to feel it fluttering and trembling under my feet.... I hear a plaintive voice murmur!.... Claire, O my Claire, where art thou? what doest thou far from thy friend?.... her coffin does not contain all of her.... it awaits the rest of its prey.... it will not wait for long.*[141]

THE END.

* As I complete my rereading of this collection, I think I see why the interest, as feeble as it is, appeals to me so, and will, I expect, to every reader with a good natural disposition. It is because this feeble interest is it least pure and unmixed with pain; because it is not driven by villainy, by crimes, nor mixed with the torment of hate. I cannot conceive what pleasure one can take in imagining and assembling the character of a Villain, in putting oneself in his place as one goes about representing him, in putting him in the most impressive limelight. I very much pity the authors of tragedies full of horrors, who spend their lives lending acts and speech to people one could not hear nor see without suffering. It seems to me that one should groan at being sentenced to such cruel work; those who do it for amusement must be thoroughly consumed by zeal for the public good. As for me, I heartily admire their talents and fine genius; but I thank God he did not bestow them on me.

Appendix I

The Loves of Milord Edward Bomston[1]

The strange adventures of Milord Edward in Rome were too novelistic to be combined with Julie's without spoiling their simplicity. I will therefore limit myself to extracting and abridging here what helps to understand two or three letters where they come up.

Milord Edward, during his travels in Italy, had made the acquaintance in Rome of a Neapolitan noblewoman, with whom he soon fell deeply in love: she, for her part, conceived for him a violent passion that consumed her the rest of her life, and finally sent her to the grave. This man, rugged and uncourtly, but ardent and sensible, extreme and grand in everything, could hardly inspire or experience a mediocre attachment.

The stoical principles of the virtuous Englishman worried the Marchesa. She elected to pass herself off as a widow during her husband's absence, which was easy for her, because they were both foreigners in Rome, and because the Marchese was serving in the Emperor's troops. It was not long before the passionate Edward broached marriage; the Marchesa invoked religious difference and other pretexts. Ultimately, they contracted an intimate and licentious relationship, until the day when Edward, having discovered that the husband was living, tried to break off with her, after heaping on her the most stinging reproaches, in a rage at finding himself guilty, without his knowledge, of a crime he held in horror.

The Marchesa, a woman without principles, but crafty and full of charms, spared nothing to hold onto him, and finally succeeded. The adulterous relationship was ended, but the relationship continued. As unworthy as she was to love, she yet did: she had to consent to seeing fruitlessly a man she adored, whom she could not otherwise keep, and with this intentional barrier stimulating love on both sides, it became the more ardent through constraint. The Marchesa did not neglect the attentions that could lead her lover to forget his resolutions: she was seductive and beautiful. All for nothing. The Englishman held firm; his great soul was being tested. His foremost passion was virtue. He would have sacrificed his life to his mistress, and his mistress to his duty. One day the seduction became too insistent; the means he was to employ in order to deliver himself from it curbed the Marchesa and made all her wiles vain. It is not because we are weak, but because we are faint-hearted that our senses always enslave us. Whoever fears death less than crime is never forced to commit a crime.

There are few of those vigorous souls which attract others and raise them to their own sphere; but there are some. Edward's was one such. The Marchesa hoped to win him over; it was he who little by little won her. When lessons of virtue took on the melody of love in his mouth, he moved her, he made her weep; its sacred flame inspired this grovelling soul; a sentiment of justice and honor brought its foreign

charm into it; the truly beautiful was beginning to please her: if the wicked could change their nature, the Marchesa's heart would have done so.

Love alone took advantage of these slight emotions; as a result it gained in subtlety. She began to love in a generous manner: notwithstanding her ardent temperament, and a climate where the senses have such empire, she forsook her pleasures to attend to her lover's and, though unable to share them, she at least wanted him to take them from her. Such was on her part the favorable interpretation of a conduct in which her character and Edward's, which she understood well, could lead one to see a more insidious form of seduction.

She spared neither effort nor expense to search out anywhere in Rome a young person who was loose and dependable; she was found, not without difficulty. One evening, after a most tender conversation, she introduced her to him: Do what you will with her, she told him with a sigh; let her enjoy my love's recompense; but let her be the only one. It suffices me that when you are with her you sometimes remember the hand that gave her to you. She started to leave; Edward held her back. Stop, he said to her; if you think I am contemptible enough to take advantage of your offer in your own house, the sacrifice is not great, and I am not much worth regretting. Since you are not to be mine, I wish you to be no one's, said the Marchesa; but if love must lose its rights, suffer it at least to dispose of them. Why does my present disconcert you? Do you fear being ungrateful? Then she obliged him to take Laura's address (that was the young person's name) and made him swear that he would refrain from any other relationship. This had to move him, and it did. His gratitude was harder to contain than his love, and that was the most dangerous trap the Marchesa had set for him in his whole life.

Extreme in everything, as was her lover, she had Laura to supper, and showered attentions on her, as if to enjoy in greater pomp the greatest sacrifice love has ever made. Edward, deeply moved, yielded to his transports; his stirred and sensible soul described itself in his glances, in his gestures, he said not a word but that was an expression of the most intense passion. Laura was charming; he scarcely looked at her. She did not imitate this indifference: she looked and saw, in the true tableau of love, an object that was entirely new to her.

After supper, the Marchesa dismissed Laura, and remained alone with her lover. She had counted on the dangers of this encounter; in this she was not mistaken; but she was mistaken in counting on his succumbing; all her craft only made the triumph of virtue more resplendent and more painful for him and for her. This is the evening to which St. Preux refers, at the end of part IV of *Julie*, in his admiration for his friend's strength.[2]

Edward was virtuous, but human. He had all the simplicity of genuine honor, and none of the false decorum that is put in its place, and of which worldly people make so much. After several days spent in the same transports with the Marchesa, he felt the peril increasing; and, on the point of being defeated, he preferred to offend civility rather than virtue: he went to see Laura.

She shuddered when she saw him: he found her sad, he undertook to cheer her up, and thought it would not take much effort to succeed. That was not as easy as he had thought. His caresses were ill received, his offers were rejected in a manner not characteristic of someone who is disputing what she wishes to grant.

So ridiculous a reception did not discourage him, it provoked him. Did he owe the deference of a child to this sort of whore? He proceeded brashly to exercise his rights. Laura, despite her cries, her tears, her resistance, knowing she was defeated, summoned her strength, hurled herself to the other end of the room, and cried out to him in a loud voice: Kill me if you want; you will never touch me alive. Her gestures, the look in her eyes, her tone of voice were not equivocal. Edward, astonished as one can imagine, calmed himself, took her by the hand, sat her down, sat down beside her, and, looking at her in silence, coldly awaited the outcome of this Comedy.

She remained silent; her eyes were downcast; she breathed unevenly, her heart pounded, and everything about her indicated an extraordinary agitation. Edward finally broke the silence to ask her the meaning of this strange scene. Might I have made a mistake? he asked her; could you be not Lauretta Pisana? Would to God, she said in trembling voice. What then! he began again with a mocking smile; might you by chance have changed trades? No, said Laura; I am still the same: there is no going back on the station that is mine. He found in this turn of phrase, and the way she uttered it, something so extraordinary that he no longer knew what to think and thought this girl had gone mad. He continued: Why then, charming Laura, am I alone excluded? Tell me what makes you hate me. Hate you! she cried more sharply. I have not loved those I have received. I can stand anyone, except you alone.

But why is that? Laura, explain yourself better, I don't understand you at all. Ah! do I understand myself! All I know, is that you will never touch me.... No! she again exclaimed angrily, never will you touch me. Feeling your arms about me, it would occur to me that you were holding nothing but a trollop, and my rage at the thought would kill me.

She grew more overwrought as she talked. Edward saw in her eyes signs of grief and despair that moved him. He adopted less condescending manners with her, a more civil and more respectful tone. She hid her face; she averted his eyes. He took her hand affectionately. She had hardly felt his hand than she carried it to her lips, and pressed it to them sobbing and pouring forth floods of tears.

This language, though quite clear, was imprecise. Edward brought her around only with difficulty to speaking to him more clearly. A long-dead modesty was revived by love, and Laura had never offered up her person with as much shame as she experienced when admitting she was in love.

Her love was scarcely born than it was already in full force. Laura was keen and sensible; beautiful enough to inspire a passion; tender enough to share it. But since she was sold by unworthy parents at an early age, her charms, soiled by debauchery, had lost their empire. In the midst of shameful pleasures, love fled her grasp; wicked corrupters could neither feel nor inspire it. Combustible matter does not burn of itself; but let a spark come near, and it all goes up in flames. Thus did Laura's heart take fire at the transports of Edward and the Marchesa. At this new language, she felt a delightful thrill: she lent an attentive ear; nothing escaped her avid glances. The moist flame emanating from the lover's eyes entered hers and descended into her heart; hotter blood coursed through her veins; the strains of Edward's voice excited her; sentiment seemed depicted in his every gesture; all his features animated by passion made her experience it. Thus her first vision of love

caused her to love the object who had enacted it for her. If he had felt nothing for another, she perhaps would have felt nothing for him.

All this excitement followed her back home. The stirrings of budding love are always delightful. Her first impulse was to give in to this new charm; the second was to open her eyes upon herself. For the first time in her life she perceived her station; it struck her with horror. Everything that sustains the hope and desires of lovers turned to despair in her soul. Even the possession of the one she loved presented to her eyes nothing but the infamy of an abject and vile creature, on whom one lavishes contempt with his caresses; in the recompense of requited love she could see nothing but ignominious prostitution.[3] Her most unbearable sufferings thus arose from her own desires. The easier it was to satisfy them, the more awful her predicament seemed; without honor, without hope, without means, she came to know love only in time to mourn its delights. So began her long sufferings, and ended her happiness of an instant.

The budding passion that so humbled her in her own eyes raised her in Edward's. Seeing that she had the capacity for love, he no longer scorned her. But what consolations could she expect from him? What sentiment could he show her, if not the minimal interest that an honest heart that is not free can take in an object of pity that has just enough honor left to feel its shame.

He consoled her as he could, and promised to come to see her again. He said not a word about her station, not even to exhort her to renounce it. What good would it do to increase the horror she had of it, since that very horror made her despair of herself? A single word on such a subject would have been consequential, and seemed to bring her closer to him: this was what could never be. The greatest misfortune of infamous trades is that it does one no good to renounce them.

After a second visit, Edward, not forgetting English munificence, sent her a lacquered chest and several English jewels. She sent it all back with this note:

> *I have lost the right to refuse presents. Yet I presume to return yours; for you perhaps did not mean it as a sign of contempt. If you send it back, I must needs accept it: but yours is surely a cruel kind of generosity.*

Edward was impressed by this note; he found it at once humble and proud. Without leaving the baseness of her station, Laura manifested a kind of dignity. It was almost to cancel her infamy by dint of humiliating herself. He had ceased feeling scorn for her; he began to think well of her. He continued to see her without mentioning the present; and although he felt no pride in being loved by her, he could not keep from feeling pleased with it.

He did not hide these visits from the Marchesa: he had no reason to hide them; and it would have been ingratitude on his part. She wanted to know more about them. He swore that he had not touched Laura. The effect of his restraint was exactly the opposite of what he expected. What! exclaimed the infuriated Marchesa, you go to see her and do not touch her? What then do you do at her place? That is when that infernal jealousy arose which led her to make a hundred attempts on both of their lives, and consumed her with rage until the moment she died.

Other circumstances completed the work of kindling this furious passion, and restored this woman to her true character. I have already remarked that, with his

rigorous integrity, Edward was lacking in delicacy. He gave the Marchesa the same present that Laura had sent back to him. She received it; not out of cupidity, but because they were on a footing that allowed for such gifts to each other; an exchange in which, in truth, the Marchesa was hardly the loser. Unfortunately she came to learn the first destination of this present, and how it had come back to him. I need not say that instantly the whole thing was broken to pieces and thrown out the window. Judge thereby what a jealous mistress and a woman of quality must have felt in such a situation.

However, the more Laura felt her shame, the less she tried to cast it off; she kept it out of despair; and the disdain she had for herself redounded upon her corruptors. She was not proud: what right would she have had? But a deep sentiment of ignominy which one would try in vain to repulse; the awful sadness of infamy which is felt and cannot be fled; the indignation of a heart that still has a sense of honor, yet feels forever dishonored; all this poured remorse and regret on pleasures abhorrent to love. A respect alien to those vile souls caused them to abandon their debauched tone; an involuntary malaise poisoned their transports; and, touched by their victim's fate, they returned home weeping for her and ashamed of themselves.

Grief consumed her. Edward, who little by little befriended her, saw that she was only too afflicted, and that he needed to cheer her and not disparage her. He went to see her; that was already a good deal in the way of consolation. His conversation did more, it encouraged her. His lofty and grand words restored to her downtrodden soul the vigor it had lost. What was not their effect issuing from a beloved mouth, and entering a well-born heart that fate delivered to shame, but nature had made for honesty! In this heart they found a foothold and into it they fruitfully bore the lessons of virtue.

Through these beneficent attentions he finally made her think better of herself. If the only everlasting stigma is that of a corrupt heart, I feel in myself the means of blotting out my shame. I shall always be scorned, but I shall not deserve to be, I shall no longer scorn myself. Having escaped the horror of vice, at least that of contempt will seem to me less bitter. Ah! what will the whole world's disdain be to me when Edward thinks well of me? Let him see his handiwork and delight in it; he alone will make up for everything. Even if there is no benefit to honor in it, at least there will be to love. Yes, let us offer the heart it sets on fire a purer home. Delightful sentiment! I shall never again profane thy transports. I cannot be happy; I never shall be, that I know. Alas! I am unworthy of love's caresses; but I will never suffer others.

Her condition was too violent to last; but when she tried to get over it, she encountered difficulties she had not foreseen. She discovered that she who relinquishes the right to her person does not recover it at will, and that honor is a civil safeguard that leaves very vulnerable those who have lost it. She found no option for escaping oppression except to go plunge herself suddenly into a Convent and abandon her house almost to pillage; for she lived in an opulence common to her peers, especially in Italy, when their age and beauty make them sought after. She had said nothing to Bomston about her plan, finding it somewhat degrading to bring it up before carrying it out. Once she was in her sanctuary,[4] she sent him a note about it, begging him to protect her against powerful people who had an in-

terest in her misconduct and would be offended at her retreat. He rushed to her house soon enough to save her personal effects. Though a foreigner in Rome, a great nobleman, highly regarded, wealthy, pleading forcefully the cause of honesty, soon mustered enough influence to maintain her in her Convent, and even to allow her the benefit of a pension which the Cardinal, to whom her parents had sold her, had left her.

He went to see her. She was beautiful; she was in love; she was penitent; she owed to him all she was to become. What claims to touch a heart like his! He came filled with all the sentiments that can inspire sensible hearts to do good; the only one missing was the very one that could have made her happy, and that was not in his power. Never had she had such great hopes; she was ecstatic; she already felt as though she had reached the station that one rarely can regain. She said: I am honest; a virtuous man takes an interest in me. Love, I no longer regret the tears, the sighs thou dost cost me; thou hast already repaid me for it all. Thou gavest me strength, and thou rewardest me; by making me take my duties to heart, thou becomest the foremost of them all. What happiness was reserved but to me alone! It is love that uplifts me and honors me; that wrests me from crime, from infamy; so long as there is virtue in my heart, love will be there still. O Edward! the day I again become contemptible, I will have ceased loving you.[5]

This retreat was much bruited about. Base souls, who judge others in terms of themselves, could not imagine that Edward had invested nothing more than the interest of honesty in this business. Laura was too lovable for the attentions a man paid her not always to be suspect. The Marchesa who had her spies was the first apprised of it all, and her fits of anger which she was unable to contain utterly gave her scheme away. Word of it reached the Marchese as far away as Vienna; and the following winter he came to Rome to get run through by a sword in order to restore his honor, which reaped no benefit from it.

Thus began these double liaisons, which in a country like Italy, exposed Edward to a thousand perils of every kind; now coming from an offended officer, now from a jealous and vindictive woman; now from those who had attached themselves to Laura and who were infuriated by her loss. Bizarre liaisons if ever there were, which, surrounding him needlessly with perils, tore him between two passionate mistresses without his being able to possess either one; refused by the courtesan he did not love, refusing the honest woman he worshipped; ever virtuous, it is true; but ever believing he was serving wisdom when he was listening to his passions alone.

It is not easy to say what sort of sympathy could unite two characters so opposite as those of Edward and the Marchesa; but, despite the difference in their principles, they were never able to detach themselves completely from each other. One can imagine the despair of this hotheaded woman when it dawned on her that she had given herself a rival, and what a rival! with her misguided generosity. Reproach, disdain, insults, threats, tender caresses, everything was tried in turn to detach Edward from this unworthy relationship, in which she could never believe that his heart played no part. He stood firm; he had promised he would. Laura had limited her expectation and her happiness to seeing him occasionally. Her nascent virtue needed support, it depended on him who had given birth to it; it was his task to

sustain it. This is what he said to the Marchesa, to himself; and perhaps to himself he did not say all. Where is the man austere enough to flee the looks of a charming creature who demands of him no more than that he let himself be loved? where is he whose honest heart dost not swell a little at tears from two lovely eyes? where is the benefactor whose beneficial †pride[6] is not pleased to enjoy the fruits of his attentions? He had made Laura too worthy of esteem to have no more than esteem for her.

The Marchesa, unable to prevail on him to stop seeing this unhappy girl, became furious; lacking the courage to break with him, she conceived a sort of horror for him. She shuddered when she saw his carriage enter, the sound of his footsteps coming up the staircase made her throb with fright. She was on the verge of fainting when he appeared. Her heart was heavy all the while he stayed with her; when he left she hurled curses at him; as soon as she lost sight of him, she would weep with rage; she talked about nothing but vengeance: her bloody spite inspired in her nothing but schemes worthy of her. Several times she had Edward attacked as he was leaving Laura's Convent. She set traps for her also to get her to come out and to abduct her. None of that was able to cure him. The next day he would return to see the woman who had tried to have him assassinated the day before, and having always his illusory scheme for restoring her to reason, he exposed his own, and fed his weakness with his virtue's zeal.

After a few months, the Marchese, ill recovered from his wound, died in Germany,[7] perhaps from grief at his wife's misconduct. This event, which should have brought Edward and the Marchesa closer together, served only to distance him even further. He found her so eager to put her recovered freedom to good use that he shuddered to take advantage of it. His very suspicion that the Marquese's wound might have contributed to his death affrighted his heart and stifled his desires. He said to himself: a husband's rights die with him for anyone else; but for his murderer they survive him and become inviolable. Even if humanity, virtue, the law, had nothing to say on this point, does reason alone not tell us that the pleasures attached to the reproduction of men ought not to be the reward for their blood; otherwise the means destined for giving us life would become sources of death and the human race would perish through the ministrations that should preserve it![8]

He spent several years thus torn between two mistresses; ever wavering from one to the other: often intending to renounce them both and able to give up neither, repelled by a hundred reasons, recalled by a thousand sentiments, and each day drawn more tightly into his shackles by his vain efforts to break them: yielding sometimes to his penchant and sometimes to his duty, going from London to Rome and from Rome to London without being able to settle anywhere. Ever ardent, impulsive, passionate, never weak or culpable, and strong in his great and beautiful soul when he thought he was only strong in his mind. In a word, every day contemplating follies, and every day coming to his senses, ready to break his unworthy fetters. It was in his first moments of disaffection that he very nearly attached himself to Julie, and it seems certain that he would have done so had he not found the position occupied.

Meanwhile the Marchesa was constantly losing ground with her vices; Laura

was gaining it with her virtues. Furthermore, the perseverance on both sides was equal; but the merit was not the same and the disgraced Marchesa, degraded by so many crimes, ultimately offered her hopeless love the supplements that Laura's had refused to tolerate.[9] At each sojourn, Bomston found new perfections in the latter. She had learned English, she knew by heart everything he had advised her to read; she educated herself in all the fields of knowledge he seemed to love: she sought to mold her soul on his, and the remaining part of it that was hers did not unbecome it. She was still of an age when beauty grows with the years. The Marchesa was in one where it can but decline, and although she possessed that sentimental tone that pleases and moves, spoke graciously of humanity, fidelity, and virtues, all this became ridiculous given her conduct, and her reputation belied all those fine words. Edward knew her too well to hope for anything more from her. He detached himself from her imperceptibly without being able to do so entirely, he came ever closer to indifference without ever being able to achieve it. His heart constantly summoned him back to the Marchesa's; his feet carried him there without his intending it. A sensible man never forgets, however he may try, the intimacy of their former relationship.[10] By dint of machinations, ruses, horrors, she finally succeeded in making him despise her, but he despised her without ever ceasing to pity her; without ever forgetting what she had done for him or what he had felt for her.

Thus ruled by his habits even more than by his penchants, Edward could not break the attachments that attracted him to Rome. The bliss of a happy home made him desire to establish one like it before he grew old. Sometimes he accused himself of injustice, even of ingratitude toward the Marchesa, and imputed her character's vices only to her passion. Sometimes he forgot about Laura's earlier station, and his heart unintentionally crossed the barrier that separated him from her. Ever seeking to rationalize his penchant, he used his last journey as a pretext for testing his friend, forgetting that he was exposing himself to a test in which he would have succumbed without him.

The outcome of this enterprise and the dénouement of the scenes related to it are recounted in the twelfth Letter of part V and in the third of part VI, in such a way as to be fully comprehensible after the preceding summary. Edward, loved by two mistresses while possessing neither, at first seems in a laughable situation. But his virtue gave him an inner delight sweeter than that of beauty, and one that does not like beauty exhaust itself. Happier with the pleasures he denied himself than is the voluptuary with those he indulges, he loved longer, remained free, and enjoyed life more than those who use it up. Blind men that we are, we all spend it chasing our illusions! Ah! shall we never learn that of all of men's follies, only the just man's makes him happy?

Appendix II

Subjects of the Engravings

Most of these Subjects are detailed so as to make them understood, much more so than they can be in the execution: for in order to realize a drawing felicitously, the Artist must see it not as it will be on his paper, but as it is in nature. The pencil does not distinguish a blonde from a brunette, but the imagination that guides it must distinguish them. The burin[11] cannot render highlights and shadows well unless the Engraver also imagines the colors. In the same way, with figures in motion, he needs to see what precedes and what follows, and accord a certain latitude to the time of the action; otherwise one will never capture well the unity of the moment to be expressed. The Artist's skill consists in making the Viewer imagine many things that do not appear on the plate; and that depends on a felicitous choice of circumstances, of which the ones he renders lead us to presuppose those he does not. Therefore one can never enter into too much detail when one wants to present Subjects for Engraving, and is absolutely ignorant of the art. Moreover, it is easy to see that this had not been written for the Public; but in putting out the engravings separately, it seemed that this explanation ought to accompany them.[12]

Four or five characters reappear in all the plates, and comprise practically the totality of the figures. The idea is to try to distinguish them by their attitudes and by their taste in clothing, so that they will always be recognized.

1. Julie is the most important Figure. Blonde; a sweet, tender, modest, enthralling physiognomy. Natural grace without the least affectation: an elegant simplicity, even a bit of casualness in her attire, but which becomes her better than a more studied appearance: little finery, always tasteful; the bust covered in the manner of a modest maiden, and not a devout woman.

2. Claire or the Cousin. A saucy brunette[13]; more finesse, more alertness, more gaiety in her; with somewhat more ornate finery, almost going as far as coquetry; but always nonetheless a measure of modesty and propriety. No paniers[14] for either of them.

3. St. Preux or the friend. A young man of common appearance; nothing distinguished; merely a sensible and interesting physiognomy. Very simple attire: a rather timid demeanor, even a bit ill at ease when he is collected; but seething and carried away in passion.

4. The Baron d'Étange or the father: he appears only once, and I shall indicate how he is to be.

5. Milord Edward or the Englishman. An air of grandeur that comes from the soul more than from his station; the mark of courage and virtue, but a little ruggedness and harshness in the features. A grave and stoic demeanor under which he barely hides an extreme sensibility. His appointments, in the English style, are those of a great Lord without ostentation. If it were possible to add to all this a modicum of swagger, it would not hurt.

6. Monsieur de Wolmar, Julie's husband. A cold and impassive mien. Nothing false or constrained; little gesture, much wit, a rather sharp eye; studying people but not making a point of it.

Such more or less must be the characters of the Figures. I shall go on to the subjects of the Engravings.

First Engraving (I, xiv, 53)

The Scene is set in a bower. Julie has just given her friend a kiss *così saporito*[15] that she falls into a sort of swoon. She is seen in a state of languor leaning, letting herself slip into her Cousin's arms, and the latter receiving her with an eagerness that does not prevent her from smiling as she looks at her friend out of the corner of her eye. The young man's two arms are extended toward Julie; with one, he has just embraced her, and the other comes forward to support her: his hat lies on the ground. A rapture, a most intense transport of pleasure and alarm must prevail in his gesture and on his face. Julie must be in an ecstasy and not in a swoon. The whole tableau must exude a sensual intoxication which a certain modesty renders all the more touching.

Inscription *of the first Plate*.

Love's first kiss.[16]

Second Engraving (I, lx, 134)

The Scene's setting is a very simple room. Five characters fill the Engraving. Milord Edward, swordless, and leaning on a cane, kneels before the Friend, who is seated beside a table on which lie his sword and hat, with a book closer to him. There must be nothing shameful or timid in the Englishman's humble posture; on the contrary, on his face prevail a pride devoid of arrogance, a dignity of courage: not in order to brave the man before whom he humbles himself, but on account of the honor he does himself by performing a good deed motivated by justice and not by fear. The Friend, surprised, troubled to see the Englishman at his feet, entreats him to rise with much concern and a most perplexed manner. The three Observers, all wearing swords, manifest astonishment and wonder, each by means of a different posture. The spirit of this subject is that the character who is kneeling imposes respect on the others, and they all seem to be kneeling down before him.

Inscription *of the second Plate*.

The heroism of valor.[17]

Third Engraving (II, x, 179)

The setting is a room at an inn, the door of which stands open and leads into another room. On a table, by the fire, in front of which Milord Edward is seated in his dressing gown, are two candles, several open letters, and a package which is still closed. Edward holds in his right hand a letter which he lowers in surprise, seeing the young man entering. The latter, still dressed, his hat down over his eyes, holds his sword in one hand while with the other he points angrily and threateningly to the Englishman's, which lies on an armchair beside him. The Englishman with his left hand makes a gesture of cold and emphatic disdain. At the same time he looks at the distracted youth with an air of compassion fit to bring him to his senses; and one should indeed perceive in his attitude that this look is beginning to unsettle him.

Inscription *of the third Plate*.

Ah, young Man! to your Benefactor![18]

Fourth Engraving (II, xxvi, 243)

The Scene is in the street in front of a dubious-looking house. Near the open door, a lackey is lighting the scene with two table candlesticks. There is a carriage a few steps away; the coachman is holding the door to it open, and a young man moves toward it to climb in. This young man is St. Preux leaving a place of debauchery in an attitude that evinces remorse, sadness, and dejection. One of the women of the house has accompanied him all the way into the street; and in her farewells one can perceive joy, impudence, and the air of a person proud for having triumphed over him. Overcome with pain and shame, he does not even notice her. At the windows are young Officers with two or three colleagues of the woman who is below. They clap their hands and applaud in mocking fashion as they watch the young man leaving who neither looks at nor listens to them. There should prevail a degree of immodesty in the women's demeanor and of disorder in their apparel that leaves no room for even a moment's doubt about what they are, and brings out all the better the sadness of the main character.

Inscription *of the fourth Plate*.

Shame and remorse avenge love profaned.[19]

Fifth Engraving (III, xiv, 273)

The Scene takes place at night, and represents Julie's room, in the disorder typical of a sickroom. Julie is in bed with smallpox; she is in a delirium. Her closed curtains have been opened just enough to allow her arm to pass through; but feel-

ing her hand being kissed, with the other she quickly opens the curtain, and recognizing her friend, she appears surprised, agitated, transported with joy, and about to lunge toward him. The lover, kneeling beside the bed, holds Julie's hand, which he has just clasped, and kisses it with a transport of pain and love in which one perceives, not only that he does not fear transmission of the venom, but that he desires it. Instantly Claire, a candlestick in her hand, noticing Julie's movement, takes the young man by the arm, and pulling him away from where he is, leads him out of the room. At the same time, a somewhat elderly chambermaid comes up to Julie's bedside to restrain her. One must perceive in each of the characters a very intense action, well captured in the unity of the moment.

Inscription *of the fifth Plate*.

The inoculation of love.[20]

Sixth Engraving (III, xviii, 287)

The Scene takes place in the room of the Baron d'Étange, Julie's father. Julie is seated, and near her chair stands an empty armchair; her father who occupied it is kneeling in front of her, pressing her hands in his, shedding tears, and in a suppliant and pathetic posture. There is disquiet, agitation, suffering in Julie's eyes. One perceives, from a certain air of lassitude, that she has tried every way to make her father rise or to get free of him; but failing to do so, she lets her head lean back against the chair, like a person about to swoon, while her two hands still extend forward and rest on her father's arms. The Baron should have a venerable physiognomy, white hair, a military bearing, and, although suppliant, something noble and proud in his demeanor.

Inscription *of the sixth Plate*.

Paternal force.

Seventh Engraving (IV, vi, 346)

The Scene takes place in the avenue of a country house, some steps outside the iron gate, before which one perceives a carriage stopped outside, a trunk behind, and a Postilion. As the disposition of this Engraving is very simple, and yet demands considerable expression, it must be explained.

Julie's friend is returning from a very long voyage; and, although the husband knows that before his marriage this friend was her favored suitor, he has such confidence in the virtue of both that he himself invites the young man into his house. The moment of his arrival is the subject of the Engraving. Julie has just embraced him, and taking him by the hand introduces him to her husband, who steps forward to embrace him in turn. Monsieur de Wolmar, naturally cold and collected,

should have an open, almost cheerful, attitude, a serene look in his eye which invites confidence.

The young man, in travelling costume, approaches with an air of respect in which one can detect, in truth, some constraint and apprehension, but not painful discomfort or suspicious embarrassment. As for Julie, one perceives in her face and in her demeanor a character of innocence and candor that reveals in this moment all the purity of her soul. She should look at her husband with a modest assurance in which are depicted her tenderness and gratitude for so great a token of esteem, and the sentiment that she is worthy of it.

Inscription *of the seventh Plate*.

The confidence of beautiful souls.[21]

Eighth Engraving (IV, xvii, 426)

It is the landscape that demands the most precision here. I cannot better represent it than in transcribing the passage in which it is described.

> *We reached it after a half-hour's walk through several shady and winding trails, which, climbing imperceptibly through the boulders, were in no way inconvenient except for the length of the hike. In this solitary place was a wild and forsaken nook, filled with those sorts of beauties which move only sensible souls and appear horrible to others. A mountain stream formed by the melting snows carried muddy water to within a hundred paces of us, noisily ferrying with it clay, sand and rocks. Behind us a range of inaccessible cliffs separated the esplanade where we were standing from that part of the Alps which is named les Glacières, because enormous crests of ice which are constantly spreading have covered them since the world began. Forests of dark spruce shaded us gloomily on the right. On the left beyond the mountain stream was a large oak wood, and almost straight down below us that immense plain of water which the lake forms in the midst of the mountains separated us from the rich coasts of the Vaud, the panorama of which was crowned by the ridge of the majestic Jura.*
>
> *In the midst of these grand and superb objects, the little spot where we were standing displayed the charms of a cheerful and rural site; several brooks filtered through the rocks, and ran down the greenery in crystal trickles. Several wild fruit trees which had taken root in the heights bent their heads over us; the damp and cool earth was covered with grass and flowers. Comparing so pleasant a retreat with the surrounding objects, it seemed that this deserted place was meant to be the sanctuary of two lovers who alone had escaped the cataclysm of nature.*[22]

One must add to this description that two blocks of stone fallen from above and suitable for serving as table and seat must be almost at the edge of the esplanade; that in the perspective of the Vaud coast that can be seen in the distance, one can make out towns at intervals along the shore, and that at least one such must be perceived opposite the esplanade described above.

On this esplanade stand Julie and her Friend, the only two characters in the Engraving. The Friend resting one hand on one of the two stone blocks points with the other to lettering engraved into the surrounding rock some distance away. At the same time he speaks to her vehemently; in Julie's eyes one can read the emotion evoked in her by his words and the objects he is recalling to her; but one can also read in them that virtue prevails, and fears nothing from these dangerous memories.[23]

There is a ten-year interval between the first Engraving and this one, and in that interval Julie has become a wife and mother: but it is said that as a maiden, she left in her attire a bit of negligence which made her more touching; and that as a wife she adorned herself more carefully. Such is the way she must appear in the seventh Engraving; but in this one, she is without finery, and in morning dress.

Inscription *of the eighth Plate*.

Monuments of bygone love.[24]

Ninth Engraving (V, iii, 458)

A parlor; seven figures. At the rear toward the left a tea table set with three cups, the teapot, the sugar bowl, etc. Around the table sit, in back and facing forward, Monsieur de Wolmar, around to his right the Friend holding the gazette; such that both of them can see everything that is going on in the room.

On the right also in back: Madame de Wolmar seated, with embroidery in her hands; her chambermaid seated beside her making lace; her cushion is resting on a smaller chair. This chambermaid, the same who will be referred to below, Plate ii, is younger than the one in the sixth Plate.[25]

In the foreground, seven or eight paces off from both these groups, is a small table on which lies a book of Engravings in which are browsing two small boys. The elder, absorbed in the figures, is showing them to his brother; but the latter is furtively counting jackstraws which he is holding under the table[26] hidden behind one side of the book. A little girl of eight, their elder, has arisen from the chair that is in front of the chambermaid, and nimbly approaches the two boys on tiptoe. She speaks in a voice of childish authority, while pointing from a distance to the figure in the book, and holding a piece of needlework in her other hand.

Madame de Wolmar must appear to have interrupted her work to observe the children's antics; the men have likewise interrupted their reading to observe both Madame de Wolmar and the three children. The chambermaid goes about her handwork.

A completely absorbed expression for the children; an expression of dreamy and blissful observation for the three onlookers. The mother above all must appear in an ecstasy of delight.

Inscription *of the ninth Plate*.

Morning in the English manner.[27]

Tenth Engraving (V, ix, 504)

A room at an inn. The time, toward the end of night. Dawn is beginning to reveal some objects; but darkness makes them almost indistinguishable.

The friend whom a painful dream has been agitating, has leapt from his bed, and hastily grabbed his dressing gown. He wanders with a look of horror, attempting to dispel with his hand fantastic objects by which he seems terrified. He gropes his way toward the door. The blackness of the Engraving, the expressive posture of the character, his wild-eyed face, all must create a ghastly effect and give the viewers an impression of terror.

Inscription *of the tenth Plate*.

Whither wilst thou flee? The Phantom is in thine heart.[28]

Eleventh Engraving (VI, ii, 528)

The Scene is set in a parlor. Near the fireplace, where a fire burns, is a gaming table at which are seated, against the wall, Monsieur de Wolmar who is seen facing forward, and opposite him St. Preux, whose body is seen in profile, because his chair is a little askance; but whose head is seen only from behind, because he is turning it toward Monsieur de Wolmar.

On the floor is an overturned chessboard the pieces of which are scattered about. Claire, with a manner half supplicating and half joking, presents her cheek to the young man, for him to apply to it a slap or a kiss, at his discretion, in punishment for what she has just done. The deed is indicated by a racket dangling from one of her hands, while she places the other on the young man's arm to get him to turn in her direction his head which he is lowering and averting sulkily. In order for this to have taken place without too much disturbance, it must be one of those small chessboards in Morocco leather that can be closed like a book, and it must be represented half-open against one of the legs of the table.

In the foreground is another person who can be recognized, by her apron, as the chambermaid; beside her lies her racket on a chair. With one hand she holds up the shuttlecock, and with the other she pretends to be straightening its feathers; but she observes obliquely, with a smile, the scene taking place near the fireplace.

Monsieur de Wolmar, with one arm hooked over the back of his chair, as if to observe more at leisure, signals the chambermaid with his finger not to interrupt the scene with a burst of laughter.

Inscription *of the eleventh Plate*.

Claire, Claire! Children sing at night when they are afraid.[29]

Twelfth Engraving (VI, xi, 605)

A bedroom notable for its elegance, but simple and devoid of luxury; flower pots on the mantlepiece. The bed curtains are half open and tied. Julie, dead, lies upon it dressed up and even adorned. There are common people in the room, men and women, those closest to the bed are kneeling, others standing, some with their hands clasped. All are looking at the body solemnly but attentively; as if still searching for some sign of life.

Claire is standing beside the bed, her face lifted heavenward, and her eyes in tears. Her posture is that of one who is speaking vehemently. She holds in her two hands a richly embroidered veil, which she has just kissed, and with which she is about to cover her friend's face.[30]

One can recognize Monsieur de Wolmar at the foot of the bed in the posture of a sad and even anxious, yet ever grave and moderate man.

In this last Engraving the figure of Claire holding the veil is important and difficult to render. French attire does not leave enough decency in casual[31] and disorderly dress. I imagine a very simple dressing gown, held together with a pin on the bust, and to avoid appearing cheap, looser and trailing a bit more than an ordinary dress. A plain kerchief carelessly tied over her bodice; a curl or lock of hair come loose from her hairdo hanging onto her shoulder. In short, a disorder in her whole person to depict deep affliction without being inappropriate, and to move, not provoke laughter.

In all other situations, Claire is merely pretty; but her tears must make her beautiful, and above all the violence of her suffering should be heightened by a nobility of posture that adds to the pathos.

This Plate is without Inscription.

Appendix III

Narrative Chronology

Chronology of *Julie*, based on that of Bernard Guyon and Henri Coulet in the Pléiade edition (Pléiade II, 1826–1829).

1732 First meeting: St. Preux is about nineteen, Julie and Claire seventeen (VI, XI). For an entire year they maintain "rigorous silence" (III, XVIII).

1733 *Fall*. Beginning of the novel: the first declaration of love; ages respectively twenty and eighteen (second preface, Pléiade p. 17). Chaillot has just died.

1734 *Summer*. The first kiss (I, XIV).
Fall. St. Preux travels to the Valais, at age 21 (II, XXVII), and meets Edward (cf. I, XLV). Julie and Wolmar meet in Vevey (I, XXII).
Late fall and winter. St. Preux in Meillerie; first sexual encounter (III, XVIII).

1735 *Spring*. The chalet project (I, XXXVIII). St. Preux goes to Neuchâtel to redeem Claude Anet. Edward at Vevey; discovery of Italian music. Julie knows she is not pregnant (I, XLIX).
Fall. The night of love (I, LIII). St. Preux's quarrel with Edward. Julie believes she is pregnant (I, LVII). D'Étange's rage and Julie's miscarriage.
Winter. St. Preux leaves for Paris, not yet 24 years of age (I, LXV, 186, note). Fortnight at Besançon and departure of Edward for Italy.

1736 St. Preux in Paris; Claire marries; Edward passes through Vevey on return from Italy.[32]

1737 St. Preux is 25 (II, XXVII, 302). Discovery of the letters, death of Madame d'Étange; St. Preux consents to Julie's marriage. Julie's smallpox.
Summer. Wolmar is expected after a three-year absence (III, XIV, 334).

1738 *Spring or summer*. Julie's marriage; her letter to St. Preux says she first saw him six years earlier (III, XVIII, 340).

1740 *Fall*. Departure of St. Preux with Anson's fleet (historical date).

1744 *Spring*. Julie and Claire are 28 (IV, II); Julie has been married six years (IV, I). Return of St. Preux in June (historical date).
Summer. St. Preux, age 30, returns to Clarens (IV, VI–VII) and visits Claire in Lausanne. Henriette is seven. In the heat of summer they visit the Elysium (IV, XI). Illness of Louis XV (historical date: August 1744). Julie's eldest son is six (V, III).
Fall. Claire moves into Clarens; St. Preux has been there for about two months (V, V). Julie has been married close to eight years (V, V, 593)! Grape harvest.
Winter. Everyone reunited; no one needs to write letters.

1745 *Spring*. St. Preux and Edward leave for Italy. Claire, age 29 (VI, II), visits her father in Lausanne a few days after the battle of Fontenoy (historical

date: May 1745) en route to Geneva. Julie's first letter to St. Preux after seven years of silence (VI, VII, 674).
Summer. St. Preux and Edward expected in late September. But first, Julie has her accident and illness (VI, XI). It is still very hot when she dies.
Late fall. St. Preux's illness; his return is delayed, and winter approaches (VI, XIII).

Appendix IV
Glossary

amour-propre—An important concept, and difficult to translate consistently. For this reason the French term *amour-propre* has been retained in the other volumes of Rousseau's *Collected Writings*; this works well in a philosophical context, but in a novel such a "foreign" expression would seem out of character. In this work, the fourteen occurrences of *amour-propre* are usually translated as "vanity," and occasionally as "self-love," "egoism," or "pride," according to context. Since *vanité* is also translated as "vanity," all renderings of *amour-propre* are marked by the sign †. (In some of Rousseau's writing, *amour-propre* is to be distinguished from *amour de soi*: see note to letter IV, XII, 491.)

chalet (*chalet*)—Dairy house; the term applied only to those simple summer lodgings (with attached stable) where cheese was made in the mountains. It is no exaggeration to say that *Julie* is responsible for the introduction of this Swiss Alpine term into French, where it was previously unknown.

comedian (*comédien*)—This generic term was used for stage actors in all genres.

condition (*condition*)—nobility.

confound (*confondre*)—To conflate, mix together so that the constituents can no longer be distinguished.

coquette, coxcomb (*petite-maîtresse, petit-maître*)—Foppish members of elegant society.

devoutness (*dévotion*)—Piety that tends toward asceticism and willful separation from the world and its pleasures. The devout (*dévots* and *dévotes*) were known for extremely regular presence at church and (in a Catholic context) in the confessional.

dinner (*dîner*)—Mid-day meal, and principal meal of the day.

distraction (*égarement*)—Can mean either moral or psychological excess. Since it contains a notion of waywardness, it connotes both a norm from which one has deviated and (since waywardness may not be a permanent state) the possibility of a return to the norm.

écu—Silver coin worth three *livres* or francs.

†**egoism**—*See* amour-propre.

fatherland (*patrie*)—On the translation of *patrie* as "fatherland" see *Collected Writings*, II., 204–205.

fault (*faute*)—A moral failing or "sin," but lacking the religious connotations of sin (*péché*), a word almost entirely absent from *Julie* (its sole occurrence is on Pléiade p. 716).

gothic (*gothique*)—Ancient, grotesque, excessively old and out of date. This word is almost always pejorative and sometimes sharply ironic.

honest (*honnête*)—Can mean honest but also respectable, chaste, or proper according to context (for example, an *honnête fille* is necessarily chaste but an *hon-*

nête homme is merely respectable). Honesty (*honnêteté*) is just as problematic; sometimes it means honesty but very frequently it is closer to honorability or decency.

honorable man (*honnête homme*)—Since the seventeenth century, this term was fixed in its designation of a well-read but debonair man of the world; in Rousseau's time its application was more general, close to what the nineteenth century would have meant by a "gentleman."

innocent (*innocent*)—*See* simple.

inseparables (*inséparables*)—Lovebirds, a term for varieties of parrot so closely bound to each other that one cannot survive without its mate: used only metaphorically in *Julie*, to refer to the two cousins, Julie and Claire.

materfamilias—*See* paterfamilias.

maxim (*maxime*)—Rousseau makes extensive use of this word to mean both formulaic wisdom specifically, and, more generally, principles of conduct that do not necessarily appear in proverbial form. Condillac wrote that "principle and maxim are two synonymous words: they both mean a truth that is the condensation of several others: but the former is applied more specifically to theoretical knowledge, and the latter to practical knowledge."[33]

milord (*milord*)—*Milord* obviously derives from the English *my lord*, but its usage is somewhat different, for like *Monsieur* it is used both as a noun, in lieu of a proper name, and as a title before the name. It is found in French as early as the sixteenth century designating an Englishman of distinction, not necessarily a lord properly defined (member of the House of Lords), or one possessed of any other particular rank. So by Rousseau's time the custom was already long since established whereby, as one of Sénancour's characters later says, "They think I am rich here. The inkeeper absolutely insists on calling me *Milord*; and I am much respected. Rich foreigner, or milord, are synonyms."[34] We have thus chosen to retain the French *milord* throughout.

modesty (*pudeur* or *modestie*)—English has only one word available here for two quite different terms in French. *Pudeur* is specifically related to sexual shame and is a quality particularly associated with the female sex; *modestie* goes rather in the direction of humility and not exaggerating one's personal importance or charm.

moral, morality (*moralité*)—A moral belief or system.

morals, manners (*mœurs*)—Usually translated "morals" here when it seems to relate to the morality of individual behavior, but sometimes ambiguous because it is often close to the modern anthropological term "mores" meaning the beliefs and customs of a people, in which case we usually translate it as "manners."

paterfamilias (*père de famille*)—A Latin word and concept: not just a father (though assumed to be that as well) but the head of a household and/or manor. Same origin and meaning for *materfamilias*.

parricide (*parricide*)—The generic term for any assassination within family or nation, including the killing of a king.

†**pride**—*See* amour-propre.

†**self-love**—*See* amour-propre.

†**self-interest**—*See* amour-propre.

sensible, sensibility (*sensible, sensibilité*)—The French *sensibilité*, closely tied to the verb *sentir* (to feel) means in the majority of cases something close to what in the twentieth century we would call "sensitivity"; its cognate "sensibility" was current in the English of the time. On the other hand, it is distinct both from *sensé* (sensible) as a synonym for "reasonable" and *sensitif* (relative to the senses), which never appears in *Julie*. When Rousseau does use *sensitif*, notably in *Emile* and *The Confessions*, it always designates something sensorial.

sentiment (*sentiment*)—There are essentially four definitions: (1) inner awareness: "the sentiment of my existence"; (2) mental feeling or emotion: "my sentiments are pure"; (3) opinion or persuasion: "my sentiment on this point"; (4) sensorial impression: "the sentiment of one's pain."

simple (*simple*), **innocent** (*innocent*)—These terms have both their current meanings and an earlier one that today would be designated by "naive."

solitary people/folk (*solitaires*)—People who live far from centers of population, but not necessarily either alone or in isolation; the term does not imply avoidance of or distaste for all human contact, but it does stand in willful opposition to large and worldly aggregations.

supper (*souper*)—The evening meal.

susceptibility—*See* amour-propre.

tableau (*tableau*)—Usually a painting (particularly a landscape painting, in contrast to a portrait), but sometimes a metaphor for a spectacle or depiction.

transport (*transport*)—The state of being "carried out of oneself"; vehement emotion; rapture, ecstasy (*OED*). Also a medical term for a temporary delirium provoked by a violent fever.

trust (*dépôt*)—An object of value entrusted to someone for safekeeping; Julie uses this word several times as a metaphor for her virginity, but it sometimes also attaches to letters or secrets.

unfortunate (*infortuné*)—An unfortunate person, or one fallen on hard times; this noun was current in eighteenth-century English.

†**vanity**—*See* amour-propre.

want (*manquer*)—To be lacking in something.

wit (*bel-esprit* or *esprit*)—*Esprit* can mean both mind and cleverness, and in the latter case is close to *bel-esprit*, except that *bel-esprit* implies showing off and is almost always pejorative in *Julie*. Wit (*esprit*) "is an art that requires culture, a sort of profession, and thereby exposes one to envy and ridicule," writes Dumarsais in the *Encyclopédie*.

world (*le monde*)—High society.

Appendix V[35]

Table of the Letters and Their Contents

Part One

First Letter, to Julie.
Her schoolmaster, having fallen in love with her, declares to her his tenderest sentiments. He reproaches her for her formality when alone with him, and her familiar tone in front of everyone.

Letter II, to Julie.
Julie's innocent familiarity in front of everybody with her school master is suppressed. His complaints on that subject.

Letter III, to Julie.
Her lover notices the uneasiness he is causing, and intends to go away permanently.

First Note from Julie.
She allows her Lover to stay; and with what a tone.

Reply.
The Lover persists in his intention to leave.

Second Note from Julie.
She insists that her Lover not leave.

Reply.
The Lover's despair.

Third Note from Julie.
Her anxiety for her Lover's life. She orders him to wait.

Letter IV, from Julie.
Confession of her love. Her remorse. She begs her Lover to spare her.

Letter V, to Julie.
Her Lover's transports; his protestations of the most inviolable respect.

Letter VI, from Julie to Claire.
Julie urges Claire, her Cousin, to return to her side, and gives her to understand she is in love.

Letter VII. Reply.
Anxiety of Claire concerning her Cousin's state of heart, and announcement of her imminent return.

Letter VIII, to Julie.
Her Lover faults her for the health and composure she has recovered, the pre-

cautions she takes against him, and no longer wishes to refuse the occasions fortune offers him that Julie cannot countervene.

Letter IX, from Julie.
She complains of her Lover's wrongs, explains to him the cause of her earlier anxiety, and of the present state of her heart, invites him to content himself with the delicious pleasure of loving purely. Her apprehensions about the future.

Letter X, to Julie.
The impression that Julie's beautiful soul makes on her Lover. The contradictions he feels in the sentiments she inspires in him.

Letter XI, from Julie.
Renewal of tenderness for her Lover, and at the same time of attachment to her duty. She describes to him how important to both it is that he entrust to her the care of their common destiny.

Letter XII, to Julie.
Her Lover acquiesces in what she asks. A new plan of study that he proposes, including several critical observations.

Letter XIII, from Julie.
Satisfied with the purity of her Lover's sentiments, she tells him she is not without hope of some day making him happy; she announces the return of her Father, and alerts him to a surprise she is preparing for him in a bower.

Letter XIV, to Julie.
The violent state of Julie's Lover. The effect of a kiss he has received from her in the bower.

Letter XV, from Julie.
She insists that her Lover go away for some time, and sends him some money to return to his country, to take care of his business matters.

Letter XVI. Reply.
The Lover obeys, and out of pride returns the money to her.

Letter XVII. Response.
Julie's indignation at her Lover's refusal. She sends him twice the original sum.

Letter XVIII, to Julie.
Her Lover receives the money, and leaves.

Letter XIX, to Julie.
Some days after his arrival in his fatherland, Julie's Lover asks her to recall him, and tells her of his apprehensions about an earlier letter he wrote her.

Letter XX, from Julie.
She reassures her Lover about his apprehensions relating to the slowness of her replies to his Letters. Arrival of Julie's Father. Her Lover's recall deferred.

Letter XXI, to Julie.
Julie's sensibility toward her Father praised by her Lover. He nonetheless regrets he does not fully possess her heart.

Letter XXII, from Julie.
Her father's astonishment at the learning and talents he discovers in her. He is apprised of the low birth and pride of the Master. Julie communicates these things to her Lover, so he will have time to think on them.

Letter XXIII, to Julie.
Description of the mountains in the Valais. Customs of the inhabitants. Portrait of the Valaisian women. Julie's Lover sees only her wherever he looks.

Letter XXIV, to Julie.
Her Lover answers her about the remuneration proposed for his attention to her education. The difference between the position they are in with respect to love, and those Héloïse and Abélard found themselves in.

Letter XXV, from Julie.
Her hopes wane day by day; she is overcome by the weight of absence.

Note.
Julie's Lover approaches the place where she lives, and notifies her of the asylum he has chosen.

Letter XXVI, to Julie.
The cruel situation of her Lover. From high in his retreat, he continually has his eyes fixed on her. He proposes that she flee with him.

Letter XXVII, from Claire.
Julie is at death's door. The effect of her Lover's proposition. Claire calls him back.

Letter XXVIII, from Julie to Claire.
Julie complains of Claire's absence; of her father who wants to marry her to one of his friends; and no longer answers for herself.

Letter XXIX, from Julie to Claire.
Julie loses her innocence. Her guilt. She no longer feels she has any resource except in her Cousin.

Letter XXX. Reply.
Claire tries to calm Julie's despair, and swears her inviolable friendship.

Letter XXXI, to Julie.
Julie's Lover, having come upon her melting in tears, reproaches her for her repentance.

Letter XXXII. Reply.
Julie regrets less having given too much for love than having deprived it of its greatest charm. She advises her Lover, whom she apprises of her mother's suspicions, to pretend that business prevents his continuing her instruction; and will inform him of the means she imagines they will have for other opportunities to meet together.

Letter XXXIII, from Julie.
Little satisfied by the constraint of public meetings, where she moreover fears

that dissipation may damp her Lover's ardor, she invites him to take up again with her the solitary and peaceful life from which she had taken him. A plan she conceals from him, and about which she forbids him to question her.

Letter XXXIV. Reply.
Julie's Lover, in order to reassure her about the distraction of which she has spoken, describes in detail all that has transpired about her in the assembly where he saw her, and promises to maintain the silence she has imposed on him. He refuses the rank of Captain in the service of the King of Sardinia, and for what reasons.

Letter XXXV, from Julie.
From her Lover's justification, Julie takes the occasion to discuss jealousy. Were he a fickle Lover, she would never believe him a deceitful friend. She is to sup with him at the home of Claire's father. What will happen after supper.

Letter XXXVI, from Julie.
Julie's parents obligated to go away. She will be deposited at the house of her Cousin's father. The arrangement she makes so as to see her Lover freely.

Letter XXXVII, from Julie.
The departure of Julie's parents. The state of her heart in this circumstance.

Letter XXXVIII, to Julie.
Witness to the tender friendship of the two Cousins, Julie's Lover feels his love redouble. His impatience to be at the Chalet, the country meeting-place Julie has designated for him.

Letter XXXIX, from Julie.
She tells her Lover to depart at once, in order to seek a leave for Claude Anet, a young lad who has undertaken to pay the rent for his mistress, whom she protected in her mother's entourage.

Letter XL, from Fanchon Regard to Julie.
She implores Julie's help to obtain her Lover's leave. This girl's noble and virtuous sentiments.

Letter XLI. Reply.
Julie promises Fanchon Regard, Claude Anet's mistress, that she will try to help her Lover.

Letter XLII, to Julie.
Her Lover leaves to obtain Anet's leave.

Letter XLIII, to Julie.
The generosity of Claude Anet's Captain. Julie's Lover asks for a tryst at the Chalet before the Mother's return.

Letter XLIV, from Julie.
Her mother's unexpected return. The advantages resulting from the trip made by Julie's Lover to obtain Claude Anet's leave. Julie announces the arrival of

Milord Edward Bomston, to whom he is known. What she thinks of this foreigner.

Letter XLV, to Julie.
Where, and how, Julie's Lover made acquaintance with Milord Edward, whose portrait he gives. He reproaches his mistress for thinking like a woman about this Englishman, and insists she carry out the tryst in the Chalet.

Letter XLVI, from Julie.
She announces to her Lover the marriage of Fanchon Regard, and gives him to understand that the tumult of the wedding can substitute for the mystery of the Chalet. She answers her Lover's reproach with regard to Milord Edward. The moral difference of the sexes. Supper for the morrow, where Julie and her Lover are to be with Milord Edward.

Letter XLVII, to Julie.
Her Lover fears that Milord Edward is to become her husband. Musical evening.

Letter XLVIII, to Julie.
Reflections on French and Italian music.

Letter XLIX, from Julie.
She assuages her Lover's fears, assuring him that there is no question of a marriage between her and Milord Edward.

Letter L, from Julie.
Reproach she makes to her Lover for having when under the influence of wine at the end of a long meal made vulgar remarks to her, accompanied by indecent manners.

Letter LI. Reply.
Julie's Lover, appalled at his misdeed, gives up wine for life.

Letter LII, from Julie.
She teases her Lover about the oath he made never again to drink wine, forgives him, and releases him from his vow.

Letter LIII, from Julie.
Fanchon's wedding, which was to take place at Clarens, will be in town, which upsets Julie's and her Lover's plans. Julie proposes a nocturnal tryst, at the risk of both their lives.

Letter LIV, to Julie.
Julie's Lover in his Mistress's wardrobe. His transports as he awaits her.

Letter LV, to Julie.
Loving sentiments of Julie's Lover, more calm, but more affectionate and more multiplied after than before their pleasures.

Letter LVI, from Claire to Julie.
A dispute between Julie's Lover and Milord Edward. The subject of it is Julie. A duel proposed. Claire, who notifies her Cousin of this adventure, advises her to send her Lover away to avoid all suspicion. She adds that first the affair with Milord Edward must be settled, and by what pretexts.

Letter LVII, from Julie.
Julie's reasons for dissuading her Lover from matching swords with Milord Edward, based principally on the care he must take for his Lover's reputation, about the notion of real honor and authentic valor.

Letter LVIII, from Julie to Milord Edward.
She admits to him that she has a Lover who is master of her heart and her person. She praises him, and swears she will not survive him.

Letter LIX, from Monsieur d'Orbe to Julie.
He tells her about Milord Edward's reply, after reading her Letter.

Letter LX, to Julie.
Milord Edward's reparation. The extent of his humanity and generosity.

Letter LXI, from Julie.
Her sentiments of gratitude for Milord Edward.

Letter LXII, from Claire to Julie.
Milord Edward proposes to Julie's father that he marry her to her school Master, whose merits he praises. The father is revolted at this proposition. Reflections of Milord Edward on nobility. Claire informs her Cousin of the notice taken in town of her Lover's quarrel and begs her to send him away.

Letter LXIII, from Julie to Claire.
The outrage of Julie's father against his wife and daughter, and for what reason. What happens next. The father's repentance. He declares to his daughter that he will never accept as his son-in-law a man such as her school Master, and forbids her ever to see or speak to him again. The impression this order makes on Julie's heart; she entrusts her Cousin with the task of sending her Lover away.

Letter LXIV, from Claire to Monsieur d'Orbe.
She instructs him on what must first be done to prepare the departure of Julie's Lover.

Letter LXV, from Claire to Julie.
The detail of the measures taken by Monsieur d'Orbe and Milord Edward for the departure of Julie's Lover. This Lover's arrival at Claire's, who tells him of the necessity of his leaving. What takes place in his heart. His departure.

Part Two

First Letter, to Julie.
Reproaches from her Lover who is prey to suffering from absence.

Letter II, from Milord Edward to Claire.
He informs her of Julie's Lover's anguish, and promises not to leave him until he sees him in a state he can count on.

Fragments joined to the previous Letter.
Julie's Lover complains that love and friendship separate him from all he loves. He suspects she was advised to send him away.

Letter III, from Milord Edward to Julie.
He proposes that she and her Lover go marry in England, and offers them a Property he owns in Yorkshire.

Letter IV, from Julie to Claire.
Indecision of Julie, uncertain whether she will accept Milord Edward's proposition or not; she asks her friend's advice.

Letter V. Reply.
Claire attests the most inviolable attachment to Julie, and assures her she will follow her anywhere, however without advising her to abandon the paternal home.

Note from Julie to Claire.
Julie thanks her Cousin for the advice she believes she detected in the previous Letter.

Letter VI, from Julie to Milord Edward.
Refusal of the proposition he had made.

Letter VII, from Julie.
She sustains her Lover's crushed courage, and insists vehemently on the injustice of his reproaches. Her fear of contracting ties which she detests, and which are perhaps unavoidable.

Letter VIII, from Claire.
She upbraids Julie's Lover for his reproachful tone, and his complaints, and admits to him that she encouraged her Cousin to send him away, and to decline Milord Edward's offers.

Letter IX, from Milord Edward to Julie.
Julie's Lover more reasonable. Milord Edward's departure for Rome. Upon his return he is to pick up his friend in Paris, take him to England, and for what purposes.

Letter X, to Claire.
Suspicions of Julie's Lover against Milord Edward. Consequences. They work things out. His repentance. His anxiety caused by a few words in a letter of Julie's.

Letter XI, from Julie.
She exhorts her Lover to make use of his talents in the career in which he is setting out, never to abandon virtue, and never to forget his Lover; she adds that she will not marry him without the Baron d'Étange's consent, but will never marry another without his own.

Letter XII, to Julie.
Her Lover announces his departure.

Letter XIII, to Julie.
Her Lover's arrival in Paris. He swears to her an eternal constancy, and informs her of Milord Edward's generosity to him.

Letter XIV, to Julie.
Her Lover's entrance into society. False friendships. Idea of the tone of worldly conversations. Contrast between speech and actions.

Letter XV, from Julie.
Critique of the previous letter. Claire's imminent marriage.

Letter XVI, to Julie.
Her Lover replies to the critique of his last letter. Where, and how one must study a people. The sentiment of his sufferings. Consolations in absence.

Letter XVII, to Julie.
Her Lover wholly in the stream of society. Difficulties of the study of society. Invitations to suppers. Visits. Theater.

Letter XVIII, from Julie.
She informs her Lover of Claire's marriage; takes measures with him for the continuation of their correspondence through a different channel from that of her Cousin; praises the French, complains that he tells her nothing about Parisian women; announces the arrival of two suitors, and Madame d'Étange's improved health.

Letter XIX, to Julie.
Reason for her Lover's frankness with respect to Parisians. For what reason he prefers England to France for the exploitation of his talents.

Letter XX, from Julie.
She sends her portrait to her Lover, and announces the departure of the two suitors.

Letter XXI, to Julie.
Her Lover draws her a portrait of Parisian women.

Letter XXII, to Julie.
Julie's Lover's transports upon seeing his Mistress's portrait.

Letter XXIII, from Julie's Lover to Madame d'Orbe.
Critical description of the Paris Opera.

Letter XXIV, from Julie.
She informs her Lover of the manner in which she managed to obtain the portrait she sent him.

Letter XXV, to Julie.
Critique of her portrait. Her Lover has it modified.

Letter XXVI, to Julie.
Her Lover taken, without realizing it, to the house of worldly women. Admission of his crime. His regrets.

Letter XXVII, from Julie.
She upbraids her Lover for his associations and false shame, as the primary causes of his fault; advises him to fulfill his role as observer among the bourgeoisie, and even among the lower class; complains of the difference between the frivolous accounts he sends her, and the much better ones he addresses to Monsieur d'Orbe.

Letter XXVIII, from Julie.
Her Lover's letters discovered by her mother.

Part Three

First Letter, from Madame d'Orbe.
She announces to Julie's Lover Madame d'Étange's illness and her daughter's despondency, and urges him to renounce Julie.

Letter II, from Julie's Lover to Madame d'Étange.
Promise to break off all relationship with Julie.

Letter III, from Julie's Lover to Madame d'Orbe, accompanied by the preceding letter.
He upbraids her for obliging him to give up Julie.

Letter IV, from Madame d'Orbe to Julie's Lover.
She apprises him of his letter's effect on Madame d'Étange's heart.

Letter V, from Julie to her Lover.
Madame d'Étange's death. Julie's despair. How upset she is to bid her Lover farewell forever.

Letter VI, from Julie's Lover to Madame d'Orbe.
He tells her how deeply he feels Julie's suffering, and commends her to her friendship. His misgivings about the true cause of Madame d'Étange's death.

Letter VII. Reply.
Madame d'Orbe congratulates Julie's Lover on the sacrifice he has made; seeks to console him for the loss of his Lover, and dissipates his misgivings as to the cause of Madame d'Étange's death.

Letter VIII, from Milord Edward to Julie's Lover.
He reproaches him for having forgotten him; suspects him of wanting to end his life, and accuses him of ingratitude.

Letter IX. Reply.
Julie's Lover assuages Milord Edward's fears.

Note from Julie.
She asks her Lover to give her back her freedom.

Letter X, from the Baron d'Étange, in which was contained the preceding note.
Reproaches and threats to his daughter's Lover.

Letter XI. Reply.
Julie's Lover defies the Baron d'Étange's threats, and accuses him of heartlessness.

Note included in the previous Letter.
Julie's Lover returns to her the right to give her hand in marriage.

Letter XII, from Julie.
Her despair at seeing herself about to be forever separated from her Lover. Her illness.

Letter XIII, from Julie to Madame d'Orbe.
She reproaches her for the care that recalled her to life. A supposed dream that leads her to believe her Lover is no longer.

Letter XIV. Reply.
Explanation of Julie's supposed dream. Her Lover's sudden arrival. He willingly inoculates himself by kissing her hand. His departure. He falls ill on the way. His healing. His return to Paris with Milord Edward.

Letter XV, from Julie.
Renewed protestations of tenderness for her Lover. She is however resolved to obey her father.

Letter XVI. Reply.
Transports of love and fury of Julie's Lover. Shameful principles retracted as soon as they are put forward. He will follow Milord Edward to England, with the intention of stealing away every year, and coming secretly to visit his Lover.

Letter XVII, from Madame d'Orbe to Julie's Lover.
She informs him of Julie's marriage.

Letter XVIII, from Julie to her Friend.
Recapitulation of their love story. Julie's intentions in her trysts. Her pregnancy. Her hopes dashed. How her mother was informed of it all. She insists to her father that she will never marry Monsieur de Wolmar. The means her father employs to overcome her resolve. She allows herself to be led to the Church. The complete change in her heart. Solid refutation of the sophisms seeking to excuse adultery. She enjoins her former Lover to content himself, as she will, with feelings of faithful friendship, and asks his permission to confess her past conduct to her husband.

Letter XIX. Reply.
Feelings of admiration and fury in Julie's Friend. He inquires whether she is happy, and tries to dissuade her from making the confession she is contemplating.

Letter XX, from Julie.
Her happiness with Monsieur de Wolmar, whose character she depicts for her Friend. What is required for two Spouses to live happily together. For what reason she will not make the confession she was contemplating. She breaks off all

relations with her Friend; allows him to give news of himself through Madame d'Orbe when important things occur, and bids him an eternal farewell.

Letter XXI, from Julie's Lover to Milord Edward.
Disaffected with life, he attempts to justify suicide.

Letter XXII. Reply.
Milord Edward forcefully refutes the reasons alleged by Julie's Lover to sanction suicide.

Letter XXIII, from Milord Edward to Julie's Lover.
He proposes that his friend seek his soul's repose in the agitation of an active life. He speaks to him of an opportunity that presents itself for same, and without explaining further, asks for his response.

Letter XXIV. Reply.
Resignation of Julie's Lover to Milord Edward's wishes.

Letter XXV, from Milord Edward to Julie's Lover.
He has arranged everything for his friend's embarcation as Engineer on a Vessel of an English Fleet setting out to sail around the world.

Letter XXVI, from Julie's Lover to Madame d'Orbe.
Tender farewells to Madame d'Orbe and to Madame de Wolmar.

Part Four

First Letter, from Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe.
She presses her Cousin to return, and in what manner. She desires her Friend to come live permanently with her and her family.

Letter II, from Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
Madame d'Orbe's project, now that she is a widow, to marry some day her daughter to Madame de Wolmar's eldest son. She offers, and shares in, the sweet anticipation of a perfect reunion.

Letter III, from Julie's Lover to Madame d'Orbe.
He announces his return to her, gives her a sketchy idea of his travels; requests permission to see her, and depicts to her his heart's sentiments for Madame de Wolmar.

Letter IV, from Monsieur de Wolmar to Julie's Lover.
He informs him that his wife has just opened her heart to him about the errors of her past, and offers his house to him. Julie's invitation.

Letter V, from Madame d'Orbe to Julie's Lover. In this letter the previous one was included.
Madame d'Orbe joins her invitation to that of Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar, and desires him to keep the name of St. Preux which she had previously given Julie's Lover in the presence of her staff, at least in their own circle.

Letter VI, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
The reception that Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar afford St. Preux. Different movements that stir his heart. The resolution he makes never to fail in his duty.

Letter VII, from Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe.
She apprises him of the state of her heart, of St. Preux's behavior, of Monsieur de Wolmar's good opinion of his new guest, and of his confidence in his wife's virtue, whose secrets he does not wish to know.

Letter VIII. Reply from Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
She describes to her the danger there could be in taking a husband into one's confidence, and insists she send St. Preux to see her for a few days.

Letter IX, from Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
She sends St. Preux, whose ways she praises, on to her, which occasions a critique of the mannered politeness of Paris. Her gift of her little daughter to her Cousin.

Letter X, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
He relates in detail the wise management that prevails in Monsieur de Wolmar's household relative to Domestics and Mercenaries: which occasions numerous reflections and critical observations.

Letter XI, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
Description of an agreeable solitude, the work of nature rather than art, where Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar seek recreation with their children; which occasions critical reflections on luxury and the bizarre taste that prevails in the Gardens of the rich. An idea of Chinese Gardens. The ridiculous enthusiasm of flower enthusiasts. St. Preux's passion for Madame de Wolmar is all of a sudden changing into admiration for her virtues.

Letter XII, from Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe.
The character of Monsieur de Wolmar, apprised even before his marriage of all that had taken place between his wife and St. Preux. New proofs of his entire confidence in their virtue. Monsieur de Wolmar must absent himself for some while. His wife asks her Cousin's counsel as to whether or not she should insist that St. Preux accompany her husband.

Letter XIII. Reply of Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
She dispels her Cousin's alarms with respect to St. Preux, and tells her to take against this philosopher all the superfluous precautions that once would have been so necessary.

Letter XIV, from Monsieur de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe.
He announces his departure, and informs her of his plan to entrust his children's education to St. Preux: a project that justifies his singular conduct with his wife and her former lover. He informs his Cousin of the discoveries he has made of their sentiments, and the reasons for the test he is putting them to by his absence.

Letter XV, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
Madame de Wolmar's affliction. The fatal secret that she reveals to St. Preux, who for the present cannot divulge it to his friend.

Letter XVI, from Madame de Wolmar to her husband.
She reproaches him for making cruel sport of his wife's virtue.

Letter XVII, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
The danger that Madame de Wolmar and St. Preux run on Lake Geneva. They manage to reach land. After dinner St. Preux leads Madame de Wolmar to the retreat at Meillerie, where he had once been wholly occupied with his dear Julie. His transports at the sight of the former monuments of his passion. Madame de Wolmar's wise and prudent conduct. They re-embark to return to Clarens. St. Preux's horrible temptation. His friend's inner struggle.

Part Five

First Letter, from Milord Edward to St. Preux.
Advice and reproaches. Praise of Abauzit, citizen of Geneva. Imminent return of Milord Edward.

Letter II, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
He assures his friend that he has recovered his peace of soul; gives him a detailed account of the private life of Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar, and the management by which they get good value from their possessions, and administer their revenues. Critique of the luxury of ostentation and vanity. The peasant must remain in his condition. Reasons for the charity one must have for beggars. The deference owed the elderly.

Letter III, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
The sweetness of meditation amidst a group of friends. The education of Monsieur and Madame de Wolmar's sons. Judicious critique of the manner in which Children are ordinarily raised.

Letter IV, from Milord Edward to St. Preux.
He asks for the explanation of Madame de Wolmar's secret sufferings, of which St. Preux had spoken to him in a letter that was never received.

Letter V, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
Monsieur de Wolmar's unbelief. The reason for Julie's secret sufferings.

Letter VI, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
Madame d'Orbe's arrival with her daughter at Monsieur de Wolmar's. Transports and celebrations on the occasion of this reunion.

Letter VII, from St. Preux to Milord Edward.
The order and gaiety that reign at Monsieur de Wolmar's during the grape harvest. The Baron d'Étange and St. Preux sincerely reconciled.

Letter VIII, from St. Preux to Monsieur de Wolmar.
St. Preux has left with Milord Edward for Rome. He expresses to Monsieur de Wolmar his joy at learning that his intention is to entrust him with his children's education.

Letter IX, from St. Preux to Madame d'Orbe.
He gives her an account of his first day's journey. His heart's new weakness. An ominous dream. Milord Edward brings him back to Clarens to cure him of his illusory fears. Assured that Julie is in good health, St. Preux departs again without seeing her.

Letter X, from Madame d'Orbe to St. Preux.
She reproaches him for not having appeared before the two Cousins. The impression that St. Preux's dream makes on Claire.

Letter XI, from Monsieur de Wolmar to St. Preux.
He teases him about his dream, and somewhat reproaches his recollection of his earlier love.

Letter XII, from St. Preux to Monsieur de Wolmar.
Milord Edward's earlier love. The motive for his trip to Rome. With what design he has taken St. Preux with him. The latter will not suffer his friend to contract an indecent marriage; on this subject he asks Monsieur de Wolmar's advice, and recommends secrecy.

Letter XIII, from Madame de Wolmar to Madame d'Orbe.
She has perceived her Cousin's secret sentiments for St. Preux; explains to her the danger she may run with him, and advises her to marry him.

Letter XIV, from Henriette to her Mother.
She expresses the displeasure her absence has caused everybody; asks for presents for her little Hubby, and does not forget herself.

Part Six

First Letter, from Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
She tells her about her arrival in Lausanne, where she invites her to come for her brother's wedding.

Letter II, from Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
She informs her Cousin about her sentiments for St. Preux. Her gaiety will always shelter her from all danger. Her reasons for remaining a widow.

Letter III, from Milord Edward to Monsieur de Wolmar.
He tells him of the happy resolution of his adventures. The effect of St. Preux's wise conduct; and accepts Monsieur de Wolmar's offer to come spend the rest of his days at Clarens.

Letter IV, from Monsieur de Wolmar to Milord Edward.
He invites him again to come share, him and St. Preux, the happiness of his household.

Letter V, from Madame d'Orbe to Madame de Wolmar.
The character, tastes, and customs of the inhabitants of Geneva.

Letter VI, from Madame de Wolmar to St. Preux.
She apprises him of her design for marrying him to Madame d'Orbe; gives him advice relative to this plan, and counters his maxims on prayer and liberty.

Letter VII, from St. Preux to Madame de Wolmar.
He declines Madame de Wolmar's plan to marry him to Madame d'Orbe, and for what motives. He defends his opinion on prayer and liberty.

Letter VIII, from Madame de Wolmar to St. Preux.
She makes reproaches to him dictated by friendship, and on what occasion. The sweetness of desire, and the charm of illusion. Julie's devoutness, and what sort. Her anxiety with respect to her husband's disbelief calmed, and by what reasons. She informs St. Preux of an outing she is to take at Chillon with her family. An ominous premonition.

Letter IX, from Fanchon Anet to St. Preux.
Madame de Wolmar hurls herself into the water, into which she has seen one of her children fall.

Letter X, to St. Preux, begun by Madame d'Orbe, and terminated by Monsieur de Wolmar.
Julie's death.

Letter XI, from Monsieur de Wolmar to St. Preux.
A detailed account of Madame de Wolmar's illness. Her different interviews with her family and a Minister about the most important things. Claude Anet's return. The tranquillity of Julie's soul in the bosom of death. She expires in her Cousin's arms. She is falsely believed to have come back to life, and on what occasion. How St. Preux's dream is in a way accomplished. The consternation of the whole household. Claire's despair.

Letter XII, from Julie to St. Preux: this Letter was included with the previous one.
Julie looks on death as a blessing from heaven, and for what reason. She enjoins St. Preux again to marry Madame d'Orbe, and entrusts him with her children's education. Her last farewell.

Letter XIII, from Madame d'Orbe to St. Preux.
She confesses to him her sentiments for him, and declares to him at the same time that she wishes forever to remain free. She describes to him the importance of the duties he is charged with; anticipates Monsieur de Wolmar's preparations for soon renouncing his unbelief; invites him and Milord Edward to rejoin Julie's family as soon as possible. Vivid portrayal of the tenderest friendship and the bitterest pain.

Appendix VI
Bibliography

For aspects of Rousseau's life and works not covered here, the reader might usefully consult N. J. H. Dent, *A Rousseau Dictionary* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992) and the extensive bibliography included at the end, pp. 262–274.

Some of the Most Important Editions of *Julie* in French

For a complete repertory of the early editions, see Jo-Ann E. McEachern, *Bibliography of the Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau to 1800*, I (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1993).

1761 *Julie ou la nouvelle Héloïse: Lettres de deux amants, habitants d'une petite ville au pied des Alpes*. Amsterdam: Marc Michel Rey. 6 vols. Original edition, the only one certified by Rousseau.

1761 Paris: Duchesne. Governmentally approved but censured edition, based on the text of the Amsterdam edition.

1761 *Recueil d'estampes pour La Nouvelle Héloïse avec les sujets des mêmes estampes, tels qu'ils ont été donnés par l'Éditeur*. Paris: Duchesne. Original edition of the engravings, accompanied by Rousseau's prescriptions for them.

1763 Amsterdam: Marc Michel Rey. 2 vols. in a set of the complete works. Includes some changes and new notes by Rousseau, but suppresses half of the notes of the original edition.

1764 Paris: Duchesne. 4 vols. The original division of the novel in six parts is suppressed; an allegorical frontispiece is added and Rousseau's twelfth engraving is replaced by one showing Julie plunge into the lake.

1925 Daniel Mornet, ed. Paris: Hachette. 4 vols. First scholarly edition, based on the original edition.

1960 René Pomeau, ed. Paris: Classiques Garnier; revised in 1973 and 1988. Essentially the same text as previous entry, but the punctuation has frequently been modified.

1961 Paris: Gallimard, "Bibliothèque de la Pléiade" (*Oeuvres complètes*, II). Text established by Henri Coulet; extensive annotation by Bernard Guyon. Reproduces text of original edition and spelling. This is the standard reference edition.

1967 Michel Launay, ed. Paris: GF–Flammarion. Same text as Pomeau edition.

1993 Henri Coulet, ed. Paris: Gallimard "Folio." 2 vols. Modernized spelling but otherwise follows the original edition.

Editions in English

Eloisa: Or, a Series of Original Letters Collected and Published by J. J. Rousseau. Translated from the French. In four volumes. London: R. Griffiths, T. Becket, P. A. De Hondt, 1761. William Kenrick translation, published between April and October 1761. Rousseau's six-part division of text is modified to four parts. Other versions of this translation:
—2d ed., 1761. Same publishers and pagination (doubtless same ed.) as first.
—1761. Dublin: James Hunter.
—3d ed., 1764. London: T. Becket and P. A. De Hondt. Includes illustrations after Gravelot, copied from the French editions, engraved by Isaac Taylor et al.
—1767. Dublin: P. Wilson.
—4th ed. London: T. Becket and P. A. De Hondt.
—1776. London: T. Becket.
—1784. London: R. Baldwin, T. Becket.
—1795. Dublin: J. Pasley et al.
—1795. London: Allen and West; Edinburgh: J. Mundell.
—1796. Philadelphia: Samuel Longcope. "First American edition," 3 vols.
—1798. Philadelphia.
—1803. London: Vernor and Hood et al.
—1810. London: John Harding, et al.
—1812. London: Longman.
—1989. Reprint of 1803 edition. Oxford: Woodstock Books.

Julia: or, The New Eloisa. A series of original letters, collected and published by J. J. Rousseau. Translated from the French. In three volumes. Edinburgh: J. Bell, J. Dickson, C. Elliot. 1773. Essentially the Kenrick translation, with changes in word selection and order in the first few letters; most importantly, the name of Julie is restored throughout. Other editions:
—1774. Edinburgh: W. Coke.
—1794. Edinburgh: Bell and Bradfute et al.

La Nouvelle Héloïse: Julie, or the New Eloise. Letters of two lovers, inhabitants of a small town at the foot of the Alps. Translated and abridged by Judith H. McDowell. University Park and London: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1968.

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Editors' Notes

Editors' Notes to Introduction

All references to Rousseau's letters are to sequential numbers in the R. A. Leigh edition of the *Correspondance complète*, 50 vols. (Geneva: Institut et Musée Voltaire; and Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1965–1991), abbreviated RAL.

1. *Sensitive Morality, or the Wise Man's Materialism* (*Confessions*, Book x, *Collected Writings*, V, 343–44).

2. Book XI, *Collected Writings* V, 456.

3. Carnival is the period of feasting between Epiphany and Lent, and during this time the Opera balls were major costume events. Rousseau later noted he had been mistaken about the woman's identity.

4. Rousseau had passed through the Valais when he returned via the Simplon Pass from Venice in 1744.

5. "In the title, instead of *moderne Héloïse*, put *nouvelle Héloïse*," he wrote to his publisher Marc-Michel Rey on 18 January 1760 (RAL 928).

6. "My opinion is that the title page should be divided and there should be two instead of one. The first will have only these words: Julie or the New Heloise. Part one. The second title will include the rest. In a word, it is absolutely essential to find the means to make the single or double title contain all I have put in it, and yet that it not be jumbled together" (letter to Rey, 29 June 1760, RAL 1037). Rousseau refers explicitly to the first of these pages as a *faux-titre* (half-title): cf. his letter to Rey on 17 July 1760, RAL 1056.

7. Letter to Rey, 6 March 1760, RAL 952.

8. Letter to Rey, 14 March 1759, RAL 788.

9. *Mercure de France*, March 1761, p. 101; April 1761, I, 66–85, and II, 108–124.

10. *Journal Encyclopédique*, 15 February 1761, 61–72; 1 March 1761, 38–54; 15 March 1761, 45–66.

11. This can pass unnoticed, however, because the Pléiade editors of the *Confessions* (I, 1959)—and following them, vol. V of *Collected Writings*—acting on the assumption that "Julie" is not a title but a nickname of sorts, never put it in italics, whereas they italicize any expression containing "Héloïse." One can see here how a simple editorial detail ("we have italicized the titles of works cited by Rousseau, judging that this was merely a matter of presentation") perpetuates an old prejudice (*Oeuvres complètes*, I, xcviii).

12. The editions in question, following the McEachern denominations, are 17A–C, 18A–B, 19, and 20, all dated 1764. Jo-Ann E. McEachern, *Bibliography of the Writings of Jean Jacques Rousseau to 1800*, I (Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 1993).

13. "This cold and ridiculous plate . . . has been added without my knowledge, I know not by whom nor why" (quoted by Guyon in the Pléiade edition, 1824).

14. The first of these appears to be in 1775, McEachern 34B.

15. These editions, ranging in date from 1782 to 1792, are McEachern numbers 45A–D, 45G, 45I, 45K, 48, 52B, 53A–B, 54. The only discrete editions wanting a mention of *Julie* are 55A (1789) and 55B (1792).

16. In the nineteenth century there also appeared occasional editions with the "Héloïse" title alone (1843, 1850, 1872, 1889). For an overview of the novel's publication history see Jean Sgard, "Deux siècles d'éditions de *La nouvelle Héloïse*."

17. See list of English editions in Appendix VI.

18. As Gustave Lanson remarks, "This had a stunning effect. It was fine for tragedy: the heroes of history and fable are known. But an unknown name, a name invented by the author, neither symbolic nor grotesque, insignificant, colorless, suggesting neither the author's moral intention, nor the characters, nor the subject—no one had ever given such a name to a comedy" (Gustave Lanson, *Nivelle de la Chaussée et la comédie larmoyante* [Paris: Hachette, 1903], 158).

19. For a list of these see the Daniel Mornet "Grands Écrivains de la France" edition of *Julie* (Paris: Hachette, 1925), II, vii–viii.

20. By comparison, Richardson's one-name titles, *Pamela* and *Clarissa*, were more rhythmically trisyllabic. Moreover, the fact that "The New Heloise" is in apposition to *Julie* makes it convenient to use it in its place, which one cannot so easily do with a moral paraphrase of a subtitle such as *Virtue Rewarded*, the subtitle of *Pamela*.

21. See, for example, the James E. Wellington edition of Pope's *Eloisa to Abelard with the Letters to Abelard in the Version by John Hughes (1713)* (Coral Gables: University of Miami Press, 1965).

22. *Lettre d'Héloïse à Abailard, traduction libre de M. Pope* (Au Paraclet [Paris], 1758), by Charles Pierre Colardeau (1732–1776). An example of its impact is a painting attributed to Greuze (its title, given by the museum, is "Lady Reading the Letters of Heloise and Abelard"), acquired in 1994 by the Chicago Art Institute, which shows a woman who is moved as she reads it .

23. "Lettres à M. de Voltaire sur La nouvelle Héloïse (ou Aloïsa)" (Geneva, 1761), in *Mélanges*, ed. Jacques van den Heuvel (Paris: Gallimard, 1961), 395–409.

24. *La nouvelle Héloïse dévoilée* (Brussels and Paris: Antoine Boudet, 1775).

25. Jean Henri Samuel Formey, *L'esprit de Julie ou extrait de la nouvelle Héloïse, ouvrage utile à la société et particulièrement à la jeunesse* [The Spirit of Julie or extract of the New Heloise, a work useful to society and especially to Youth] (Berlin: Jean Jasperd, 1763), vi–vii; cf. Anna Attridge, "The reception of *La Nouvelle Héloïse*," *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century* 120 (1974), 246.

26. Ferdinand Brunetière, *Études critiques sur l'histoire de la littérature française* (Paris: Hachette, 1893–1907).

27. René Doumic, *Histoire de la littérature française* (Paris: P. Delaplane, 1910).

28. Gustave Lanson, *Histoire de la littérature française* (Paris: Hachette, 1895).

29. *Le roman au dix-huitième siècle* (Paris: Société Française d'Imprimerie et de Librairie, 1898), 248.

30. *La grande encyclopédie* (Paris: Larousse, 1886–1902), 28, 1064–1065.

31. *Oeuvres complètes*, t. II (Gallimard, 1961), 1335–1336.

32. Ed. Henri Coulet (Paris: Gallimard, 1993), 2 vols.

33. St. Preux is in any case a pseudonym for the hero: cf. Rousseau's notes to letters III, XIV, and IV, V.

34. I have never seen an eighteenth-century edition that carried the name in hyphenated form: one finds only the variants "St. Preux," "S. Preux" and "Saint Preux"; the first in which I have seen it hyphenated is the Pierre et Firmin Didot (Paris) edition of 1814.

35. For that matter, Rousseau never wrote his name Jean-Jacques but rather Jean Jacques.

36. Letter to Jacob Vernes, 24 June 1761, RAL 1436.

37. *Clarissa; or, the History of a Young Lady*, 1747–1748.

38. Ralph Alexander Leigh, eds., *Rousseau after Two Hundred Years: Proceedings of the Cambridge Bicentennial Colloquium* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 147. Christopher Frayling adds, in the same volume: "if ever there was a time when [the protagonists'] love was 'pure', it is certainly not contained within the time-span or narrative of the novel. And Julie's final admission shows that the socialisation of her love . . . has not worked. The human problems raised by the various relationships in the novel are not resolved. If they were, the novel would be a great deal less interesting than it is" (p. 150).

39. John Lord, *Beacon Lights of History* (New York: Wm. H. Wise, 1921; rig. 1896), VII, 57–58.

40. *Rousseau Judge of Jean Jacques* (*Collected Writings* I, 31).

41. Abbé Desfontaines (attr.), disputing Rolli's criticism of a French translation of *Paradise Lost* in *Le pour et contre*, no. 29 (1733), II, 326.

42. Umberto Eco, *The Island of the Day Before*, trans. William Weaver (London: Minerva, 1996), 8.

43. See in particular the first item in the glossary regarding use of the symbol † to flag occurrences of *amour-propre*.

Editors' Notes to Prefaces

1. From sonnet 338 on the death of Laura, "Lasciato ai, Morte, senza sole il mondo."

2. It is important to note that the Rousseau who speaks as "editor" is a character who differs in some specific ways from the author Rousseau: for example, he does not "know" for certain whether the book is fictive, whereas the latter does. He is for this reason analogous to the "Rousseau" of *Rousseau Judge of Jean-Jacques* (*Collected Writings*, I).

3. Members of one of the French *académies*, or learned societies.

4. This term, used with sharp irony here, had the pejorative sense of excessively old and out of date.

5. *Letters of Two Lovers*, which was on the title page; but he also could be referring to the name of Héloïse in the subtitle.

6. There is no general agreement about whether this so-called "second preface" should be published at the head of the novel, although it is in the Pléiade edition being followed here; some editors have included it instead as an appendix. It did not appear in the first edition, nor did Rousseau intend it to, as his letters to his

publisher make quite clear. In truth, it fully makes sense to the reader only after the book has been read; but it is entitled "preface" and thus logically comes first.

7. Because *Letters of Two Lovers . . .* is part of the novel's title, and because Rousseau plays so much on the ambiguity of the letters' authenticity, the words "Letters" and "Collection" (*recueil*), often capitalized, seem to serve more or less as titles of the work.

8. This preface was written well before publication of the novel itself, and this sentence would lead one to assume that the "first" preface in fact derived from the "second."

9. No one has ever known just why Rousseau chose this letter to designate the "man of letters"; perhaps it could allude to someone like Jean Neaulme and Nicolas Duchesne, who collaborated in the publication of *Emile*. On the other hand, there is good reason for seeing this preface as an imaginary dialogue with Diderot, an argument set forth by Susan Jackson in "(Without) Naming Names: The *Préface de Julie*" (*Rousseau's Occasional Autobiographies* [Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1992], 104–141), and in "Text and Context of Rousseau's Relations with Diderot" (*Eighteenth-Century Studies* 20 [1986–1987], 195–219). The "editor" "*R*," on the other hand, is explicitly named Rousseau in the course of the conversation itself—though not as "author," in order to preserve the ambiguous status of the letters themselves.

10. The first satire of Persius opens on this exchange: "'Who will read this thing?' 'Perhaps two, perhaps none.' 'What disgrace! What misery!'"

11. Either this means the next world (i.e., the characters are angels, too perfect), or it is slightly pejorative in another sense: they are some kind of bizarre or exotic foreigners in this world (Cyrano de Bergerac's *L'Autre Monde* [ca. 1650], for example, takes place on the Moon).

12. The engravings were prescribed and entitled by Rousseau; see appendix II. The expression *les belles âmes* is also found once in the text (letter IV, XII, 406), but in a passage unrelated to the engraving so entitled.

13. "The world" (*le monde*) means worldly society, particularly (for Rousseau) the upper classes of the large cities.

14. The idea that original language was figurative is developed by Rousseau in the initial chapters of his *Essay on the Origin of Languages* (Pléiade, V).

15. An allusion to Rousseau's civic status in Geneva; he had, as he will mention later in the dialogue, signed both of his *Discourses* "citizen of Geneva."

16. Rousseau was forty-eight years of age when *Julie* was published.

17. Rousseau will refer throughout this conversation to *solitaires*, people who live far from population centers but neither alone nor in isolation; cf. glossary.

18. *Mère de famille*: not just a mother, but one who presides over a household; cf. glossary.

19. Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, I, 3.

20. Céladon is the model lover and Astrée the heroine of Honoré d'Urfé's *L'Astrée* (1606–1628), a famous pastoral romance.

21. In the first edition, each of the six parts of *Julie* was printed as a separate volume.

22. The military Order of St. Louis, representing great distinction, was established by Louis XIV in 1693.

23. The term *chevalier d'industrie* used by Rousseau refers to card sharks and confidence men, but here it is also an ironic play on the contrast between the lord and officer he was, and the kind of "chevalier" he has become.

24. Rousseau had cast himself as a sort of "hermit," to whom Diderot wrote in 1757: "Farewell, Citizen! Yet a hermit is a strange sort of citizen" (*Correspondance*, ed. Georges Roth [Paris: Minuit, 1955–1991], I, 233). He was further irritated and shocked by a sentence in Diderot's *Le fils naturel*, published in 1757: "Only the wicked man is alone" (cf. *Confessions*, Book IX, *Collected Writings*, V, 382).

25. "Pensions" could come from various patrons including the king, but were a contingent and individual liberality and not, as the word would be understood today, income from investments owned by the beneficiary. There were numerous "academies" in France; all but the Parisian ones were located in regional capitals. "Dinners" refers to regular dinner parties (usually weekly) hosted by the wealthy.

26. That is, all three of the formal ranks: clergy, nobility, and commoners.

27. Rousseau uses *pasteurs* here in the etymological sense as a synonym for "shepherds": Arcadian shepherds were a master topos of the pastoral genres, notably the Italian *Arcadia* by Sannazaro (1504); cf. Poussin's famous painting *Et in Arcadia ego* at the Louvre. Daphnis and Sylvandre are typical neo-Greek names for heroes of pastoral romance, but here they relate more specifically to Honoré d'Urfée's *Astrée*, mentioned above, the action of which is situated on the banks of the Lignon in central France. Daphnis and Chloe themselves derive from Longus's romance.

28. *Petites-maîtresses*; cf. glossary.

29. "R" says *fou* but is also playing on the etymological sense of *alienation*, the estrangement of the self. An implicit subtext for this discussion of how novels lead to madness is of course *Don Quixote*, but others in the tradition are Charles Sorel's *Le berger extravagant* (1627) and Marivaux's *Pharsamon* (1712).

30. Paradoxical formulation, reversing the usual, edifying truism, which would rather have been "The world's wisdom is madness."

31. That is, *Letters of Two Lovers* (cf. note 5), which, as Rousseau indicated in the first preface, should serve as a warning about the book's subject matter.

32. Letter II, XVIII: "I for one have no other manner of judging my Readings than to sound the dispositions in which they leave my soul, and I scarcely imagine what sort of goodness a book can possess when it does not lead its readers to do good" (214). We have adjusted Rousseau's page reference to fit this edition.

33. The allusion is to instructional reading in the form of novels written for children by such authors as Bridard de la Garde, Mme Leprince de Beaumont, and Mme de Villeneuve.

34. In particular, this doubtless refers to Richardson's *Pamela* (1740) and *Clarissa* (1747–1748). The term used here for "girls" is *jeunes filles*, which might also have been translated "young women" or "young ladies."

35. The passage in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* reads: "Scan most modern plays, it is always a woman who knows everything, who teaches everything to men; it is al-

ways a Lady of the court who teaches the catechism to the little Jean de Saintré" (Pléiade, V, 45). *Jehan de Saintré* is a fourteenth-century tale by Antoine de La Sale.

36. In other words, Clarens was (and still is) pronounced with a silent *s* [klarā].

37. That is, Rousseau's own *Letter to M. d'Alembert* referred to above.

38. Rousseau's play *Narcisse ou l'amant de lui-même* [Narcissus or the man in love with himself] was performed by the Comédie Française in 1752.

39. Rousseau's *Le devin du village*, an opera performed in 1752.

40. Part of the pages alluded to read as follows: "It is no longer an issue of bringing peoples to do good, it is only necessary to distract them from doing evil; it is necessary to occupy them with foolishness to turn them away from bad actions; it is necessary to amuse them instead of preaching to them" (preface to *Narcissus*, *Collected Writings*, II, 196); "I say that there are countries where the morals are so poor that just to attain to love would be an accomplishment; others where they are good enough for it to be a shame to sink that far, and I dare believe that the situation of mine is the latter" (*Letter to M. d'Alembert*, Pléiade V, 107).

41. Letter II, XXI.

42. One finds the term *philosophie* here, as often throughout *Julie*, used in a sarcastic and pejorative way, as a reference to traditional philosophy but perhaps even more to contemporary philosophy (that of the "philosophes"), which is linked to the decline of values (cf. Preface to *Narcissus*, *Collected Writings* II, 186–198).

43. The motto in question is "*Vitam impendere vero*" ("To devote one's life to truth"), which Rousseau was to place very prominently on the title page of his *Letters from the Mountain* in 1764. Indeed Rousseau wrote to his publisher Rey, with respect to *Julie*: "I am against your gracing this novel's frontispiece with my motto. I am not too sure what it would be doing there, and moreover it seems to me in bad taste for the title of a book of this kind to be mottled with Latin, French, and Italian. However I find the jest so good that I will see you are given credit for it in public at the right place and time" (RAL 973, 24 April 1760).

44. The story, from Phedrus, concerns a man whose imitations of a pig were judged more authentic than the squeals of a real pig (*Fables*, V, 5); Rousseau might also have read it in Plutarch or in Lesage's *Gil Blas* of 1715–1735 (Book III, chap. 6).

45. In letter II, III.

46. In Paul de Man's reading of *Julie*, Rousseau's reply here produces a far-reaching and absolutely critical ambiguity: "The very statement by which we assert that the narrative is rooted in reality can be an unreliable quotation"; moreover, when one considers that the Petrarchan passage is itself an adaptation from the Gospel of John (1:10), "the very document, the manuscript, produced in evidence may point back, not to an actual event, but to an endless chain of quotations reaching as far back as the ultimate transcendental signified God, none of which can lay claim to referential authority" (*Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979], 204).

47. A curious and paradoxical detail, since really there seem to be none, although the editor points to a trifling one in letter IV, XVII.

Editors' Notes to Part I

1. *Madame votre mère* in the original, an extremely deferential locution with no English equivalent, strongly suggesting the writer's consciousness of being a subaltern.

2. See glossary, appendix IV.

3. On Julie's blond hair, cf. letter I, 1, 120, and appendix II.

4. This term (*aliénation*) has very strong connotations both for the psychology of love and for the preceptor's mentality; for while it captures the obsession of first love, another of its meanings is insanity.

5. Petrarch, sonnet 11, "Lassare il velo per sole o per ombra."

6. Although the first letters are all labelled "to Julie," her own are not designated as being *to* anyone but *from* her. It is Rousseau's design that the young man remain unnamed until much later in the novel (the first mention of his name is in a footnote to letter III, XIV), being designated instead most often simply as "the friend" (*l'ami*). A subtle result of this device where everyone but he is designated by proper name is that he becomes the implicit hub of the correspondence, hidden behind every *to* and *from* in which he is either sender or receiver.

7. The dots are a conventional device to suggest *temporal* hesitation: here, to give the sense that Julie is perhaps still deciding, when she begins the "you," how the sentence will end.

8. These terms have intense but veiled meanings, picked up on in the next two missives, that will never be fully explained until letter III, XVIII.

9. Here Julie shifts dramatically into the intimate *tu* form of the second-person pronoun, which the two will use throughout most of part I. These modulations from *vous* (you) to *tu* (thou) and back are thematically important, but there would be no way to render them in English without reverting to an archaic usage of *thou* and *thee* to which they correspond.

10. This sentence ("Et ne m'as-tu pas trop entendue?") is an echo of Phèdre's declaration of love to Hippolyte: "Ah! cruel, tu m'as trop entendue" (Racine, *Phèdre*, II, 4).

11. In this translation, apostrophes of this type will be rendered in the traditional second-person *thee/thou* form. This apostrophe is a possible echo of lines from Pope's *Eloïsa to Abelard*, where it is Heloise who applies them instead to Abelard:

> Should at my feet the world's great master fall,
> Himself, his throne, his world, I'd scorn 'em all:
> Not *Cæsar's* empress wou'd I deign to prove;
> No, make me mistress to the man I love. (85–88)

12. *Duègne* in French, but from the Spanish *dueña*, is a young lady's chaperon—usually elderly, hence the playful contrast here. Based on indications such as Claire's age given here, the chronology of the novel can be quite precisely reconstructed: the cousins are two years younger than the preceptor, now twenty, and this moment is situated in the fall of 1733 (see chronology in appendix III).

13. A term used by children for their governess, from *m'amie* (my friend) (f.).

14. The "master" is the preceptor.

15. On the meanings of "maxims," see glossary, appendix IV.

16. Metastasio, *Il tempio dell'Eternità*.

17. This is the passage in Rousseau's note: "Si cum hac exceptione detur sapientia, ut illam inclusam teneam nec enuntiem, ericiam," Seneca, *Epistle VI*; quoted by Montaigne (*Essays*, III, 9); it is translated by Donald Frame as: "If wisdom were given me on this condition, that I keep it hidden and unuttered, I should reject it" (754). Rousseau may be citing from memory; in any case he gives a perverse cast to Seneca's meaning, which is that friendship requires one to share knowledge.

18. Cf. *Emile*: "When understanding appropriates things before depositing them in memory, what it draws from memory later belongs to it; whereas, by overburdening memory without the participation of understanding, one runs the risk of never withdrawing anything from memory suitable for the understanding" (Book III, Pléiade, IV, 486–487; Bloom, 207).

19. "We are richer than we think, but we are trained to borrow and beg; we are taught to use the resources of others more than our own." Montaigne, *Essays*, III, 12; Frame, 794).

20. An allusion to Julie's mention of "physics lessons" in letter I, XI.

21. The tradition reflected here is that of history as a moral science; in Rousseau's writings the archetype of the good historian who rises to the challenge of good subject matter is Plutarch.

22. Petrarch (1304–1374), Tasso (1544–1595), and Metastasio (1698–1782) are all Italian poets. The masters of French theater are those who will be discussed in part II: Corneille, Racine, Molière, Prosper Crébillon, Voltaire, etc.

23. His phrase (*livres d'amour*) probably means love stories or romances in general.

24. Because Solomon asked for wisdom and not riches, God gave him both (I Kings 3:11–14).

25. A light carriage with folding top.

26. "Love's first kiss" is the subject of the first illustration prescribed by Rousseau; cf. appendix II.

27. *Âcres*: acrid, bitter, tart; this expression was much derided by some of Rousseau's critics, particularly Voltaire in his *Lettres sur La nouvelle Héloïse ou Aloisia de Jean Jacques Rousseau* (1761), attributed to the Marquis de Ximenez; the text is reproduced in Jacques van den Heuvel, ed., Voltaire, *Mélanges* (Paris: Gallimard "Pléiade," 1961), pp. 395–409.

28. The Valais is today a canton of Switzerland lying to the east of Lake Leman (Lake Geneva); Rousseau once considered writing its history.

29. The Pays de Vaud (mentioned in the note) is on the north side of Lake Leman, adjoining the Valais on the east; its capital is Lausanne.

30. Capital of the Valais, on the Rhone upstream of Lake Leman.

31. For Rousseau fatherland (*patrie*) denotes a politically free community of fellow citizens rather than simply a territory; in the context of this novel, it might be a canton. Julie is alluding to her lover's lack of political status in Vevey; nothing ever specifies precisely where his *patrie* lies, although it is later stated that he is Swiss.

32. A *point d'honneur* technically refers to the provoking of a duel to avenge an affront to one's honor.

33. For the first time, the "small town at the foot of the Alps" in the book's title is named: Vevey, in the Pays de Vaud, is on the north shore and near the eastern end of Lake Leman.

34. "Academician" means a member of the royal Académie Française. The grammatical point in question (the connecting of the affirmative "and millions of" with the restrictive clause "there is only") is quite minor.

35. In other words, the courier did not leave Sion for several days after he had the lover's first letter in hand, at which time he had already been given the second as well. Epistolary novels frequently exploit the anxious awaiting of a letter; Rousseau's originality here lies in specific references to the way the post functioned.

36. Metastasio, *Attilio Regolo*, II, 9: the daughter of Regulus is declaring that she will follow her father into captivity.

37. Metastasio, *Demofoonte*, final scene.

38. This item is an indication of one of d'Étange's principal traits, his great pride in his nobility.

39. *Honnête* is indeed equivocal—it might also have been translated "proper"—and its use here is intentionally so. "An *honnête homme* can be either a man of good birth, or a man who knows how to conduct himself in society, or a virtuous man, or finally a man of honorable station. The first meaning [is] the only one recognized by the Baron d'Étange" (Henri Coulet, Folio ed. of *Julie*, I, 478). But the Baron's instincts are not off target here. Marivaux's Jacob in *Le paysan parvenu* (1734–1735) plays with the ambiguity of the term, answering to a question of his identity by saying he is "the son of an honorable man [*honnête homme*] who lives in the country" ("le fils d'un honnête homme qui demeure à la campagne") as a way of avoiding the word "peasant" ("Classiques Garnier" edition [Paris: Bordas, 1992], 216; cf. pp. 184 and 254 and Frédéric Deloffre's remarks on pp. 453–455).

40. This could be an allusion to stoicism, but is also close to the psychological philosophy behind Rousseau's unrealized project for a work called *La morale sensitive ou le matérialisme du sage* ("Sensitive morality or the wise man's materialism") described in *Confessions* (Books IX–X, *Collected Writings*, V, 343–344, 432).

41. This rather vague term was closely associated with melancholy; it is properly designated, according to the first *Encyclopædia Britannica* of 1771 (III, 148), as the "hypochondriacal disease."

42. In this ideal rather than "real" nature, as Christie (Vance) McDonald observes, "the physical characteristics that Rousseau attributes to the summit (the pure air and the sense of weightlessness) seem to pass curiously into man and become moral qualities" (*The Extravagant Shepherd*, *Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century*, 105 [1973], 65).

43. Petrarch, *Gloriosa columna in cui s'appoggia* . . . , Durling trans., p. 44. As Christie McDonald has pointed out, the whole metaphorical movement of the passage is that of a spatial ascension, whence Rousseau's omission of the line "Onde si scende poetando et poggia" ("Where we climb and descend poetizing"), which would have introduced an undesirable downward implication (66–67).

44. This passage should be compared with the discussion of another world where nature and human passions are at odds in *Rousseau Judge of Jean-Jacques* (*Collected Writings*, I, 8–13).

45. An écu (see Rousseau's note) is three *livres* or francs.

46. These observations can be compared with the pages on a world without money in Book I of the *Confessions* (*Collected Writings*, V, 30–32). Two centuries earlier the Valaisan Thomas Platter (1499–1582) had remarked that midwives in that region refused to be paid, saying that "to take money for services rendered in such a case would be regarded as a great sin" (*Ma vie* [Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1982], 88).

47. Don Quixote allows four maids to mock him by lathering his beard and face, in the belief it is a local custom (*Don Quixote*, II, 32).

48. Helen's, according to Pliny the Elder: "Lindos, on the Island of Rhodes, has a temple of Minerva where Helen consecrated an electrum chalice; the story adds that it was molded on her breast" (*Natural History*, XXXIII, 23).

49. A very similar passage in *Emile* describes Sophie's modest wiles: "Her adornment is very modest in appearance and very coquettish in fact. She does not display her charms; she covers them, but, in covering them, she knows how to make them imagined. When someone sees her, he says, 'Here is a modest, temperate girl.' But so long as he stays near her, his eyes and his heart roam over her whole person without his being able to take them away; and one would say that all this very simple attire was put on only to be taken off piece by piece by the imagination" (Book V, Pléiade, IV, 747; Bloom, 394).

50. A description of Armida in the Christian camp from Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, IV, 31.

51. This particular sense of "living" is underscored in *Emile*: "The man who has lived the most is not he who has counted the most years, but he who has most felt life. Men have been buried at one hundred who died at their birth. They would have gained from dying young; at least they would have lived up to that time" (Book I, Pléiade, IV, 253; Bloom, 42).

52. La Fontaine, *Le fou qui vend la sagesse* [The Fool who sells wisdom], IX, 8).

53. This phrase (*une espèce de valet*) is precisely the one (except that he modified it to *valet suisse*) that Voltaire uses to describe Rousseau's protagonist (*Lettres à M. de Voltaire sur la Nouvelle Héloïse*: cf. note 27 to letter I, XIV, 52).

54. On Abelard and Heloise and their vogue in the eighteenth century, see introduction.

55. Letter I, XVII.

56. *Maîtresse* here, like *amant* elsewhere, often refers in the classical language to people who are in love. There is perhaps nonetheless a suggestion of Heloise's proud claim in Pope's *Eloïsa to Abelard* that it is more glorious to be Abelard's mistress—because it is an act of freedom—than his wife:

If there be yet another name, more free,
More fond than mistress, make me that to thee!
Oh happy state! when souls each other draw,
When love is liberty, and nature, law. (89–92)

57. Metastasio, *Antigone*, I, 2.

58. That is, on the French side of Lake Leman (then Savoie) opposite Vevey.

59. *Le sort qui m'accable*, a possible echo of Phèdre's confession to Oenone, which begins:

Quand tu sauras mon crime et *le sort qui m'accable*,
Je n'en mourrai pas moins, j'en mourrai plus coupable. (Racine, *Phèdre*, I, 3)

60. These terms are specific to the Lake Leman region: *séchard* is the northwest wind, *bise* wind from the north.

61. This cry of rage in the wilderness suggests the ambiance of "gothic" themes such as those popularized at just this period (1760–1761) by poems attributed to the mythic Ossian by James McPherson; a sampling of these was published in French translation as early as 1760 by Turgot in *Le Journal Étranger*.

62. See letter I, XI.

63. The comparison of fading beauty to that of a flower is a conceit of poetry in the *carpe diem* tradition, and is particularly reminiscent of Ronsard's sonnet "Mignonne, allons voir si la rose," which concludes:

Cueillez, cueillez votre jeunesse:
Comme à cette fleur, la vieillesse
Fera ternir votre beauté"

("Pluck, pluck your youth: / As with this flower, old age / Will make your beauty fade").

64. Leucadia's Rock, the cliff or "Lovers' Leap" in the Ionian Sea from which Sappho was supposed to have leapt to her death.

65. This detail and numerous others will be further explained much later, in retrospective, in letter III, XVIII.

66. For the term "transport," see glossary.

67. This reasoning works on an implicit syllogism: to conceal things from me is to conceal them from yourself, since my existence is contained within yours.

68. The basic idea here is more Catholic than Protestant, namely that the merits of a saint can be transferred to the benefit of a sinner on earth.

69. Metastasio, *Il Ciro riconosciuto*, III, 12.

70. Author unknown.

71. Probably he realizes the nature of the "enigma" to which she has alluded, but respects her desire not to call it by name.

72. La Savoie was under the rule of the king of Sardinia.

73. Sacconex, a Protestant, commanded the troops from Berne that won the battle of Wilgerghen (25 July 1712) in this war between Protestant and Catholic cantons.

74. It might be the *Gazette de France*, although there were other newspapers named *gazettes*, and the word can well be used generically.

75. Guillaume de Lamberti or Lamberty was the author of *Mémoires pour servir à l'histoire du XVIII^e^ siècle* (1724–1740).

76. Orbe is the name of a city in the Pays de Vaud.

77. The question was what form of tribute Don Carlos should render to the pope for investiture following his conquest of Naples in the spring of 1734: this allusion provides a critical reference in the novel's chronology.

78. A small German-speaking city (Solothurn) north of Berne.

79. Argus: a god with a hundred eyes, whom Hera set to watching over Io.

80. La Vevaise flows into Lake Leman east of Vevey.

81. On "chalet," see glossary.

82. Petrarch, canzone "Standomi un giorno solo a la fenestra."

83. For "inseparables," see glossary.

84. A sanctuary of Venus where two lovers are reunited in Montesquieu's lightly erotic tale *Le temple de Gnide* (1725).

85. *Amie* (f.); in other words, Claire.

86. Petrarch, sestina "A la dolce ombra de le belle frondi," Durling, 366.

87. Occasionally the novel includes a real name. Rousseau had known Merveilleux as an interpreter at the French embassy in Soleure; he mentions him in his *Confessions* (Book IV, *Collected Writings*, V, 135). The army in question would be the Prussian army, Neuchâtel (on the northern rim of Lake Neuchâtel) being under the king of Prussia. Claude Anet too is a person Rousseau knew, mentioned numerous times in Books III–IV of the *Confessions*.

88. "The word *virtue* comes from *strength*; strength is the foundation of all virtue" (*Emile*, Book V, Pléiade, IV, 817; Bloom, 444). This is a key sentence for Rousseau's understanding of virtue: it is not merely some absolute value but a moral challenge; it is never merely present but requires strength to attain, and in this sense is close to the etymological sense of the Latin *virtus*.

89. Rousseau evokes in Book VI of the *Confessions* "that internal satisfaction that I tasted for the first time in my life of saying to myself, I deserve my own esteem, I know how to prefer my duty to my pleasure" (*Collected Writings*, V, 217).

90. That is, he obtained a cash bounty, as was the frequent practice, for enlisting in the service.

91. See note 79 to letter I, xxxvi, 91.

92. The term is *prêcheuse* (also applied by others to Julie), which is in the feminine and therefore means something like "preacher-girl."

93. With respect to the title "milord," see glossary. Rousseau's contemporary English translator, William Kenrick, refused to make use of a name so palpably un-English and simply designated Milord Bomston as "Lord B——": "The English nobleman, who acts a considerable part in this romance, is called in the original Lord *Bomston*, which I suppose Mr. Rousseau thought to be an English name, or at least very like one. It may possibly sound well enough in the ears of a Frenchman; but I believe the English reader will not be offended with me for having substituted that of Lord B—— in its room. It is amazing that the French novelists should be as ignorant of our common names, and the titles of our nobility, as they are of our manners. They seldom mention our country, or attempt to introduce an English character, without exposing themselves to our ridicule. I have seen one of their late celebrated romances, in which a British nobleman, called the Duke of *Workinsheton*, is a principal personage; and another, in which the one identical lover of the heroine is sometimes a Duke, sometimes an Earl, and sometimes a simple Baronet; *Catombridge* is, with them, an English city: and yet they endeavor to impose upon their readers by pretending that their novels are translations from the English" (1761 preface). "Catombridge" is probably an allusion to Marie Jeanne Riccoboni's *Lettres de Mistriss Fanni Butlerd* (1757), whose original title contains the name Milord Charles Alfred de Caitombridge.

94. The Simplon is the best known mountain pass between Italy and Switzerland, one of the very few ways of getting from northern Italy to the Valais. Brig, upriver from Sion, is the first town when coming down on the Valais side of the pass.

95. This unpretentious but great English lord bears some resemblance to the Duke of D*** described by Leblanc, a prodigy by French standards because "to the splendor of a very high birth, and a great estate, joining the eminency of his ancestors, [he] is nevertheless so plain in his manners, so void of all pomp, and in a word so little susceptible of vainglory, that the regard due to his rank, and the respect he himself gains, equally embarrass him." The generosity Bomston will manifest again echoes this portrait of a man who is "a stranger to all other privileges of his rank but the power of being useful to his country, and knows not that there are men below him, but by the means he finds of doing them good" (Jean Bernard Le Blanc, *Lettres d'un Français* [La Haye, 1745], translated as *Letters on the English and French Nations* [London: J. Brindley, 1747], letter XXIV, I, 164–165).

96. In Tasso's *Jerusalem Delivered*, canto 16.

97. There is a discussion of the equality of the sexes in Book V of *The Republic*.

98. This theory is explained by Rousseau in Book V of *Emile*, Pléiade, IV, 692–693; Bloom, 357–358.

99. Cf. Rousseau's comment about Mademoiselle de Mellarède in the *Confessions*: "I fear nothing in the world as much as a pretty person in dishabille; I would dread her a hundred times less dressed up" (*Collected Writings* V, 159).

100. It will be clear from the references to punch that it is an alcoholic drink, typically a mixture of tea, lemon juice, sugar, perhaps spices, and spirits such as rum, and served warmed.

101. What is meant by "scenes" here is scenes from French opera.

102. It can be seen from this sentence that the word "accent," of which this is the third occurrence in the passage, refers mainly to tonic accents (the syllable of a given word that is always stressed), which the French language is exceptional in lacking; but it can also denote a forced style of singing.

103. Jean-Baptiste Lulli or Lully (1632–1687), born in Italy and brought in his early teens to France, became the proudest musician and composer of Louis XIV's court and founded under his aegis the Académie Royale de Musique, the formal name of the Paris Opera; cf. *New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1991), III, 83–92.

104. Not a recitative, but a solo declamatory scene often including airs: the term derives from the use of extended narrative in lieu of action in French classical theater, as in the famous *récit de Théramène* recounting Hippolyte's death in Racine's *Phèdre* (V, 6); cf. *New Grove Dictionary of Opera* (London and New York: Macmillan, 1991), III, 1251.

105. The *castrato* (or *evirato*) was a male soprano (usually Italian) whose voice, prized for its tone and power, was owing to early castration. *Castrati* substituted for female voices during a period (sixteenth to eighteenth centuries) when women were not allowed in church choirs or on stage.

106. Petrarch, sonnet "Grazie ch'a pochi il Ciel largo destina."

107. Rousseau's own ecstasy over the discovery of Italian music is related in

Book VII of the *Confessions*: "From Paris I had brought [to Venice] the prejudice they have in that country against Italian music; but from nature I had also received that sensitivity of discrimination against which prejudices do not prevail. Soon I had for that music the passion which it inspires in anyone able to judge it. When I listened to barcaroles it seemed to me I had not heard singing until then" (*Collected Writings*, V, 263). He was a fervent supporter of Italian music in the *guerre des Bouffons*; cf. his *Lettre sur la musique française* (Pléiade, V, 287–328).

108. Cf. *Emile*: "Far from arising from nature, love is the rule and the bridle of nature's inclinations; it is due to love that, except for the beloved object, one sex ceases to be anything for the other" (Book IV, Bloom, 214).

109. *Ni prude ni précieuse*: people referred to as *précieux* and *précieuses* (terms that gave rise to the English "preciosity") were pretentious about their refinement of expression, especially in sentimental matters; Molière had famously satirized them in *Les précieuses ridicules*.

110. Presumably she is referring to his letter from the Valais, where he said that "one must know when to stop and avoid excess" (letter I, XXIII).

111. It was said that the men from the four cantons of Lake Lucerne were great drinkers when they came to buy their wine in the Pays de Vaud.

112. It was fashionable at least for a while and in certain circles to drink water instead of wine, and one should remember that water was not necessarily even safe to drink. Observations similar to Julie's are to be found, for example, in Jean Bernard Le Blanc's *Letters on the English and French Nations* (cf. note to letter I, XLV, 102): "The French Petit-maîtres were formerly drunkards; but [the ladies] have succeeded in making them water-drinkers. . . . They have too much influence over manners. By making the young men soberer, it is to be feared they have made them more effeminate" (letter LXI, II, 108). The *Encyclopédie* article on water in 1755 stated that "drinkers of *water*, compared to drinkers of wine (according to the ordinary manner of considering the dietetic virtues of *water*), more commonly enjoy good health than the latter. The former are less subject to the gout, to redness of the eyes, to trembling in the members, and to other discomforts, that are rightly counted among the fatal consequences of the use of spirits" ("Eau [*Méd.*]," V, 193–194).

113. Mayenne was chief of the Ligue when it made its peace with the Huguenot king Henri IV in 1596. The king made the fat man take rapid strides and, when this made him huff and puff, said he would exact no further vengeance.

114. An apparent allusion to the second essay in Plutarch's *Moralia*, or *Πῶς δεῖ τοῦ νέου ποιημάτων ἀκούειν* or "Quomodo adolescens poetas audire debeat" ("How Youth Should Read Poems"), where Plutarch recommends adding water to wine to promote one's sobriety and attention to the works of the Muses. Julie's allusion, evidently made from memory, adds Bacchus by way of unconscious metonymy, and substitutes nymphs for the Muses.

115. The diminutive form of this name may be a reflection of his condition, inasmuch as Regianino is apparently the *castrato* already referred to in letter I, XLVIII, 109.

116. Passages marked by sudden increase in force.

117. Not necessarily a bass instrument per se, but the *basso continuo* or lowest instrumental line, even if carried by a violin.

118. Julie somewhat mocks her usual style (which would be to intone "the most excellent mother") in her jaunty recapitulation: the lovers' one possible moment to get away together was foiled by the vigilant and suspicious mother.

119. The extreme proximity between the time of writing and action in the process of unfolding is a technique frequently used by Richardson, whose Lovelace says, in an often-quoted expression of this tendency, "I love writing to the moment" (*Clarissa*, original edition, letter 224).

120. To give the lie (*démenti*) is a formal act in the honor code; it means, originally, to deny another's truthfulness, and by extension to cross him in a way that challenges his integrity.

121. According to the chronology developed by Henri Coulet, this point in the novel takes place in the fall of 1735 and the first declaration of love to Julie goes back to the fall of 1733 (see chronology in appendix).

122. Arbiter of all combats, that is; in other words, God.

123. Plutarch relates that when Eurybiades made as if to strike Themistocles with a staff for contradicting him, the latter replied, "Strike and thou wilt, so thou wilt hear me" ("Life of Themistocles," Thomas North trans.).

124. French proverb (*Autres temps, autres mœurs*).

125. "Brave" here means brave but also proud, with considerable overtones of machismo.

126. Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, II, 60.

127. It needs to be remembered in such expressions that "courage" derives from *cœur* (heart), so that "heart" used in this way is still on the same subject.

128. The survival of duelling was frequently decried in the early eighteenth century. In Françoise de Graffigny's *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* (1747), for example, Zelia is appalled to learn that in France people approve a practice whereby "a man is obliged to risk his life to rob another of his if he learns that this other man has spoken any words against him, or to banish himself from society should he refuse to take such cruel vengeance" (*Letters from a Peruvian Woman*, trans. David Kornacker [New York: Modern Language Association, 1993], letter XXXIII). Rousseau touches briefly on the subject in his *Letter to M. d'Alembert* (Pléiade, V, 67). Samuel Richardson's Clarissa too had expressed arguments against duelling, albeit in a very different context; fearful that her cousin William Morden will seek to avenge her death, she leaves him a posthumous letter hoping to dissuade him:

> Duelling, sir, . . . is not only an usurpation of the Divine prerogative; but it is an insult upon magistracy and good government. 'Tis an impious act to take away a life that ought not to depend upon a private sword: an act, the consequence of which is to hurry a soul (all its sins upon its head) into perdition; endangering that of the poor triumpher—since neither intend to give to the other that *chance*, as I may call it, for the Divine mercy, in an opportunity for repentance, which each presumes to hope for himself.
>
> Seek not then, I beseech you, sir, to aggravate my fault by a pursuit of blood, which must necessarily be deemed a consequence of it. Give not the

> unhappy man the merit (were you assuredly to be the victor) of falling by your hand. At present he is the perfidious, the ungrateful deceiver; but will not the forfeiture of his life, and the probable loss of his soul, be a dreadful expiation for having made me miserable for *a few months only*, and through that misery, by the Divine favour, happy to all eternity?
>
> In such a case, my cousin, where shall the evil stop? And who shall avenge on you?—And who on your avenger? (*Clarissa*, letter 518).

129. This is the subject of *Julie*'s second engraving, entitled "The heroism of valor."

130. He is recognizing that Julie—"only a mortal"—might actually die as a result of his actions; and by "die altogether" he refers to the possibility they might both die (based on the conceit that she is "half" of him).

131. It was unusual in the novel to speak of things as common as the foods eaten by the characters. Fréron, a harsh critic, even objected to the very mention of teatime in Crébillon's *Les heureux orphelins* of 1754 (*L'Année Littéraire*, 19 June 1754, 278), and Voltaire in his *Lettres sur la nouvelle Héloïse* (cf. note to letter I, XIV, 65) twice quotes in mockery the phrase "I sent for a chicken."

132. "Satisfaction" is what is achieved by settling accounts by means of a duel.

133. That is, if he drank less.

134. The Vaud nobility, to which Baron d'Étange belongs, had been excluded from all official positions by the Berne government.

135. It was of course, by 1761, quite permissible in common parlance to use the term "noble" in an approving sense not closely bound to nobility of rank, and Bomston bases his argument on the idea that "noble" qualities thus defined are equivalent to (or better than) noble blood per se. The disagreement between Bomston and d'Étange on this point is thus fundamental, d'Étange holding to the traditionalist view that noble qualities are inherited with the same blood that confers rank.

136. Julie mentioned earlier that one of the functions of honor is to defend those who are absent (letter I, LVII, 129). Bomston's pointed use of the word "affronts" is a veiled threat to d'Étange that he may risk a duel over this.

137. Here Edward in turn comes dangerously close—as in some of what follows—to affronting the baron personally.

138. The one worthy or "illustrious" case to which Rousseau alludes in his note is doubtless that of author Charles Pinot Duclos, a friend and advisor of Rousseau, who was ennobled in 1756. Some royal offices (*charges*) carried nobility with them, and could indeed be purchased (at very great cost) from the crown. As the note's conclusion suggests, nobles were not exposed to hanging, which was the way commoners were executed.

139. Rousseau's note was in error: a letter of protest published by the *Mercure de France* in September 1761 pointed out that the Vaud had always been part of the Helvetian Confederation and that all Swiss citizens were "subjects" of their sovereign councils.

140. Stauffacher and Fürst were members of the conspiracy that rose against Austria in 1307; William Tell was supposed to have been Fürst's nephew.

141. *Dieu et mon épée* means "God and my sword"; *Dieu et mon droit*, "God and my right," is the motto in the English royal arms.

142. This tells us that Claire and Julie are first cousins. Claire earlier revealed that her mother died when she was young and that she has brothers (letter I, VII).

143. *Un prétendu bel-esprit*: cf. glossary under "wit."

144. This expression (*philosophie parlière*) is borrowed from Montaigne (*philosophie ostentatrice et parlière*), where it refers to Pliny the Younger and Cicero (*Essay* I, 39).

145. Another distinction between author Rousseau and the "editor" (cf. preface, note 2) is that, as here, the latter can sometimes express surprise at things in the text. Rousseau here underscores for the first time the fact that the hero of this story is never named. Majority was attained at age twenty-five in the Pays de Vaud, as in most of France.

146. Grandson, near Yverdon on the shore of Lake Neuchâtel, is like Vevey in the Pays de Vaud; he might plausibly be from there.

Editors' Notes to Part II

1. This is an apostrophe; that is, he addresses not Julie in these sentences but the image of her as an abstraction.

2. Besançon, about 100 km northwest of Lake Leman, was capital of Franche Comté, which had been part of France since 1678.

3. La Fontaine speaks in *Les obsèques de la lionne* ("The Lioness's Funeral") of "certains compliments de consolation / Qui sont surcroît d'affliction" ("certain compliments of consolation / Which only increase affliction," *Fables*, VIII, 14).

4. A sign of confusion and wishful thinking: Vevey is where they started from.

5. An evangelical metaphor: "Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house" (Matthew 5:15).

6. Rousseau's note refers to the celebrated case of a young lawyer, La Bédoyère, whose marriage to actress Agathe Sticotti was forcibly dissolved in 1745; the story was immediately exploited by Baculard d'Arnaud in his novel *Les époux malheureux*. Rousseau appears to be unaware that father and son had been reconciled, and the marriage recognized, in 1758. This note was censored in the Parisian edition of 1761 on the grounds that it was unfair and too clear about the identities of the parties.

7. Cf. second *Discourse*.

8. Rousseau, like other novelists of his time, sometimes imitates in writing, via such ellipses or more exactly unspaced dots called *points de suspension*, the *spoken* drama of uncompleted sentences; it was borrowed from a theatrical style (*style entrecoupé*) in vogue for the nascent "serious" genre or *drame*. Here it represents a graphic imitation of the suspension of the voice by a person too upset or moved to speak in complete sentences, which are reduced to impulsive fragments. Since Edward refers to these fragments as drafts, these phrases should perhaps be thought

of less as spastic utterances than as phrases he was writing down for use in a letter never sent.

9. Letter II, 1.

10. Rousseau had been apprenticed to a Genevan engraver in his youth and therefore not only understood thoroughly the techniques in use but retained a fondness and fine critical eye for prints and illustrations made from copper engravings.

11. For the second time in this letter Edward uses a metaphor derived from copper engraving: the first invoked the specific characteristics of each individual impression made from a given copper plate, this one the etching process that creates the image in the metallic surface by application of aqua fortis (nitric acid) to its exposed parts.

12. There are several rivers by this name, which in fact is a generic name for river.

13. Edward has thus read letter I, XXIII, written from the Valais.

14. Le Blanc in his *Letters on the English and French Nations* (cf. note to letter I, XLV, 102) asserts that English laws regarding marriage are very different from the French ones: "they tend all to favor even the most indecent marriages. They do not require public notice and ceremony enough" (letter X, I, 61). "In England," Montesquieu, perhaps repeating Le Blanc, also wrote in *L'Esprit des lois* (1748): "girls often abuse the law in order to marry as they wish, without consulting their parents" (XXIII, 8).

15. This is the first time the man to whom Julie's hand has been promised is named.

16. "Your friend" (*ton ami*, m.) here refers to Julie's lover.

17. With a notion of mysteriously subtle fluids (closely related to the "animal spirits" that were thought to be the source or power or life) that might transmit a feeling or quality between individuals, Claire combines a moral hypothesis according to which the spectacle of virtuous action itself serves to spawn the creation of new virtue. This power of emulation underpins the theory of bourgeois or domestic drama that had been launched in 1757 by Diderot: "Nothing is more captivating than the example of virtue," asserts Dorval, "not even the example of vice" (Diderot, *Entretiens sur "Le Fils naturel"*).

18. There is paradox in the way Claire puts this: in medical tradition, a temperament was determined by humors, or fluid equilibria in the body, so temperament and humors could not contrast as they do here.

19. Tasso, *Aminta*, I, 2.

20. Claire's conclusion here is somewhat elliptical: were d'Orbe attracted to Julie, she would gladly see him marry Julie instead, if by so doing Julie could be cured of her own attraction to her lover.

21. *La pragmatique sanction*: a proclamation of Charles VI of Austria in 1713 to keep his lands undivided and make it possible for a woman, his daughter Maria Theresa, to inherit his throne. France would agree to this in 1738; this part of the novel takes place near the end of 1735.

22. Italian for "So much the better!"

23. Julie's somewhat surprising and categorical response shows that she has understood Claire's advice as completely unambiguous, despite the carefully balanced

and even ostensibly indecisive presentation of the previous letter. This fact speaks worlds about Claire's rhetorical skills and Julie's understanding of Claire. The subtle genius of Claire's argument is that, although it is indeed neutral with respect to the choice Julie must make between father and lover, it saddles her with a tremendous responsibility for her cousin; and Claire's penultimate paragraph, apparently making light of the possible consequences to others of her own decision to stay by Julie come what may, in fact brings home the point that the suffering provoked by a decision on Julie's part to elope with her lover would not be limited to her own family.

24. The pathos of the scene evoked here is indicative of the esthetic climate in which the *drame* was developing, and this subject itself suggests the diptych Greuze will realize soon after in *La malédiction paternelle* and *Le mauvais fils puni* ("The father's curse" and "The punishment of the prodigal son," 1765) at the Louvre.

25. This spontaneous, muted recognition characterizes the "beautiful souls" who form the nexus of this story; Julie and her lover expressed similar sentiments for Edward when they first met him, before better acquaintance brought the "enlightened esteem" that complements the earlier, but no less sure, intuition.

26. This letter and the next are replies to letter II, 1.

27. *Et toi aussi*: both the words and the context (betrayal of one's last friend) make this an almost certain echo of Shakespeare's "Et tu Brute!" in *Julius Caesar*. Shakespeare seems to be the only source for the expression: Plutarch's *Life of Caesar* says only that Caesar stopped defending himself against his assassins when he saw Brutus among them with his sword drawn. There is no certainty that Rousseau was familiar with Shakespeare's play directly, but he probably at least knew its adaptation in Voltaire's *La mort de César* of 1733, in which the line is: "Et toi, Brutus, aussi" (III, 1). Rousseau also echoes this line in the *Confessions*: "Et toi aussi, Diderot, m'écriai-je" ("And you too, Diderot? I cried to myself": Book X, *Collected Writings* V, 416).

28. On the use of dots in prose style, cf. note 8 p. 161.

29. Claire responds here to the "suspicions" commented upon by the editor in a note to the fragments on p. 161.

30. Bomston does not immediately explain what this error was, but it will become apparent in letter II, x.

31. "Men" (at the end of Rousseau's note) is used in the universal, not the virile, sense: the meaning is that Englishmen are too exceptional to stand for the human race in general.

32. That is, letter II, vi.

33. Subject of the third engraving, entitled: "Ah, young Man! to your Benefactor!"

34. Letters II, vii–viii.

35. The intertext of this phrase ("qu'on citera seule entre toutes les femmes") is the *Ave Maria*, in which the phrase "Benedicta tu in mulieribus" ("Blessed art thou among women") is in French "Vous êtes bénie entre toutes les femmes".

36. Italics in a letter are a conventional device to indicate quotation of precise terms from an earlier letter; these are Julie's words from letter II, vii.

37. Much is vague about the purpose of this exposure of Julie's lover to Parisian

society. His general purpose is to establish credentials through "merit" alone that will lead the baron to reconsider his outright dismissal of him as suitor to Julie. From this language one is led to assume that this is to be accomplished not (despite Julie's invocation of zeal and talent) by making his own fortune—the bourgeois sense of merit—but by acquiring the protection of people of standing in the aristocratic world: it is in this sphere that Bomston's personal contacts can be the most directly exploited (we have seen Edward refer above in letter II, IX, to "degrees of consideration that can compensate for birth").

38. Petrarch sonnet "In nobile sangue vita umile e queta."

39. The remark in Rousseau's note is a curious and paradoxical one, since the notion of "Platonic" love would normally make it seem more compatible with impassive thinkers; cf. *Emile*, Book IV (Pléiade, IV, 677; Bloom, 344).

40. Heroic biography is invoked several times in *Julie*, its model for Rousseau clearly being Plutarch, the source for at least two of the models (Brutus and Cato) listed below.

41. Elagabalus or Heliogabalus, Roman emperor (218–222), known for his debauchery and extravagance.

42. This was the method by which Socrates was condemned by Athens to die.

43. Julie is thinking not of Shakespeare's Brutus but of Lucius Junius Brutus, one of the first Roman consuls, who is supposed to have died in single combat to prevent the return of the Tarquins.

44. Marcus Atilius Regulus was tortured for failing to negotiate peace with the Romans; cf. note 105 to letter III, XXII, 322.

45. Cato the Younger committed suicide when he learned of Caesar's victory at Thapsus in 46 B.C.E.

46. That is, as preacher (*prêcheuse*): see letter I, XLIV.

47. Metastasio, *Attilio Regolo*, II, 2. He quotes from memory, prodded by Julie's mention of Regulus in the preceding letter.

48. Perhaps an allusion to Herostratus, who was supposed to have set fire to the temple of Artemis in order to achieve fame.

49. Cf. Genesis 2:18: "And the Lord God said, It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an help meet for him."

50. The "blades" (*lames de fleuret*) with which an artificial magnet was made were separate pieces of polished steel about six inches long, which bundled together would produce a strong magnetic force (a process described by Lemonnier in the first volume of the *Encyclopédie* in 1751, p. 220).

51. This "collection" could be thought of as one of the "editor"'s sources and thus reinforce fictively the claim of the novel's subtitle.

52. This clever turn rationalizes and recuperates the heavy metaphors of the preceding sentences, as it reinforces the editor's claim that the writers are straightforward, artless provincials.

53. A pointed rejoinder to those who defended the economic value of the production of luxury goods: Voltaire in particular, who called superfluity "necessary" ("Le superflu, chose très nécessaire") in his famous poem *Le Mondain* (1736).

54. The expression "friend of truth" (*l'ami de la vérité*) in the note suggests Rousseau's own personal motto, "Vitam impendere vero".

55. The "world" as in "worldly": the paradox of his transition is highlighted by an oxymoron, the designation of a crowded place as a desert. The almost operatic sententiousness of this opening is reminiscent of the inscription over Hell's gates in the *Purgatorio*: "Lasciate ogni speranza, voi ch'entrate" ("Abandon all hope, you who enter").

56. Scipio Africanus is quoted by Cicero as saying that he was never less idle than when he was idle, nor less alone than when alone (*De officiis*, III, 1).

57. An echo, perhaps, of a phrase from Ovid's *Tristia* that Rousseau had already cited as epigraph to the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*: "Barbarus hic ego sum quia non intelligor illis" ("Here I am the barbarian, because no one understands me"); *Collected Writings*, I, 202).

58. This is precisely one of Alceste's objections in Molière's *Le misanthrope*, a play the worldly tone of which Rousseau attacks in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* of 1757 (V, 33–41); it is also a theme of the first *Discourse*.

59. Both the tone and the content of this paragraph are highly reminiscent of Montesquieu's satires of Parisian life in *Lettres persanes* (1721), and in some ways also of Zelia's surprise at worldly exaggeration in Françoise de Graffigny's *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* (1747): "They rarely fail to add a superfluous compliment to one that was superfluous in the first place, making an effort to be convincing that is in no way successful. They protest the sincerity of the praises they are forever lavishing with extravagant flattery and reinforce their declarations of love and friendship with so many unnecessary terms that the sentiment itself goes utterly unrecognized" (*Letters from a Peruvian Woman*, trans. David Kornacker [New York: Modern Language Association, 1993], letter XXIX).

60. There is hardly any English phrase that can translate this notion except "men of letters," although Rousseau's *gens de lettres* is in fact not sex-specific; the *Encyclopédie*, published beginning in 1751, was signed on the title page "par une société de gens de lettres."

61. That is, neither too long nor too short.

62. This sentence is, in both style and content, typical of a maxim in the tradition of La Rochefoucauld.

63. The wig is that of the *parlementaire* or judge, his class (*noblesse de robe*) being designated by the robe; the uniform belongs to the military officer, represented by the sword (*noblesse d'épée*); the pectoral cross is worn by a bishop; men of finance represent the ascendant capitalist bourgeoisie.

64. That is, like machines, specifically clocks, that are wound up once a day.

65. Plutarch's life of Alcibiades relates how he successively sided with the Athenians, Spartans, and Persians in the Peloponnesian War.

66. Cf. this passage from the second *Discourse*: "the Savage lives within himself; the sociable man, always outside of himself, knows how to live only in the opinion of others; and it is, so to speak, from their judgment alone that he draws the sentiment of his own existence" (*Collected Writings*, III, 66).

67. "Palace" means the *palais de justice*; the phrase refers to a magistrate or barrister.

68. Béat de Muralt, *Lettres sur les Anglais et les Français* (1725), translated into English and published in 1726 as *Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the*

English and French Nations. He says that of all classes he knows the military best, and has "always observed less show and more reality among military men, generally speaking, than others" (London: Edlin and Prévost, 1726, p. 162). The influence of Muralt on Rousseau's notion of the English has been studied by Arthur Ferrazzini in *Béat de Muralt et Jean-Jacques Rousseau* (La Neuveville: Éditions du Griffon, 1951).

69. The sarcasm in Rousseau's note concerns the worldly life of officers (nearly always noble) during times of peace when they were often garrisoned in large cities.

70. *Tableau mouvant*: a sort of tableau, says Féraud's dictionary, in which "there are figures set in motion by a hidden mechanism."

71. This letter is a set piece in many ways reminiscent of the observations of Usbek and Rica in Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes* (1721). But as Julie's next letter makes clear, it is, from its writer's standpoint, really a pastiche of such prose.

72. A paradox based on the Newtonian theory of gravitation (the force of which is inversely related to the distance between objects), which lovers' hearts defy.

73. Petrarch, "Sennuccio, i' vo' che sapi in qual manera . . . ", Durling, 220.

74. That is, his first letter from Paris, letter II, XIII.

75. Allusion to autoeroticism, which was commonly held not only morally repugnant but also prejudicial to good health; cf. Tissot's treatise *De l'onanisme* (1760). Rousseau alludes numerous times in the *Confessions* to his own discovery of what he calls the "dangerous supplement" and to his own susceptibility to it: "I learned that dangerous supplement that fools nature and saves young people of my disposition from many disorders at the expense of their health, their vigor, and sometimes their life" (*Collected Writings*, V, 91). The practice is flatly condemned in *Emile*: "Once he knows this dangerous supplement, he is lost" (Book IV, Pléiade IV, 663; Bloom, 334). This whole passage is based on an opposition between a sensual vocabulary applied to the nostalgic lover in Paris and a sentimentally but nonsensually nostalgic Julie in Vevey.

76. The various means of satisfying sexual needs are discussed in the dialogue *On Love*.

77. She is picking up on specific phrases he used in letter II, XIV, 191–192.

78. Conceits or metaphors (an example will follow).

79. The attribution in Rousseau's note is mistaken: the real source is Claudio Achillini's *A Luigi XIII dopo la presa della Rochella e la liberazione di Casale*.

80. "Their brilliant wit," according to Muralt, is "the principal character of the French" (*Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations* [London: Edlin and Prévost, 1726], 99); cf. note 68 above.

81. Giovanni Battista Marini or Marino (1569–1625), who signed himself in France "le Cavalier Marino."

82. Theological factions: the Molinists are followers of the doctrine of Luis Molina, a Spanish Jesuit (1536–1600), and the Jansenists, followers of the Dutchman Jansenius (1585–1638), whose *Augustinus* published in 1640 gave rise to a century of Catholic dissension in France.

83. The "abbé" was often an *abbé de cour*, an ordained man but not attached to a parish, abbey, or any regular exercise of priesthood.

84. The collection of Julie's letters mentioned earlier in letter II, XIII.

85. In the Koran, there are several references to houris, that is, wide-eyed women who will be encountered in paradise: see Koran 44:54, 52:20, 55:72, 56:22.

86. As a Protestant, he could hold no public or regulated office in France; less officially, his religion might be an impediment to other forms of achievement or recognition.

87. This phrase (*dîners réglés*) denotes more or less open tables occurring on fixed days and not requiring a special invitation.

88. This may refer both to jargon in the general sense and to the widespread use of pet names for people in particular social circles; for either, the neophyte might require a key. Rousseau relates in the *Confessions* his own uncomfortable encounter with this language: the Président de Lamoignon and Mme de Broglie, he relates, "had that little jargon of Paris, all in small talk, all in little delicate allusions. There was no way for the poor Jean Jacques to shine in this" (Book VII, *Collected Writings*, V, 243). This style goes back in many ways to the *précieux* of the seventeenth century; cf. these remarks by Desfontaines in 1734 about wits (*beaux-esprits*): "Antitheses, affected and precious phrases, whatever shocks nature and good sense, provided it be new, and prettily turned. . . . The lovely metaphysics of the heart is reserved to them alone; that is their study; they spend their lives cooking up jargon to express felicitously their nuanced and delicate ideas" (*Le pour et contre*, XXXV, 112–113).

89. These observations are again reminiscent of Zilia's in Françoise de Graffigny's *Lettres d'une Péruvienne* (1747), in a passage added in 1752, which in turn quotes from Charles Duclos's *Considérations sur les mœurs* (1750): "One must draw the attention of those listening through the subtlety of often impenetrable thoughts or by burying their obscure nature under a plethora of frivolous expressions. I read in one of their best books: *The spirit of society consists in pleasantly saying nothing at all, in not allowing oneself to make the least sensible utterance unless one has it excused for the grace of its formulation, and, finally, in concealing reason whenever one is forced to produce it*" (*Letters from a Peruvian Woman*, trans. David Kornacker [New York: Modern Language Association, 1993], letter XXIX).

90. *Gimblette* (in Rousseau's note): a sort of doughy ring that could be used as a dog biscuit (cf. Fragonard, *La Gimblette*); the point apparently is that a trained dog upon seeing a *gimblette* loses all discipline, and chaos ensues. The Tyrinthians evoked in Fontenelle's dialogue between Théocrite and Parménisque (*Nouveaux dialogues des morts*) derive from Theophrastus as quoted by Athenaeus; the anecdote is as follows: "Theophrastus, in his work *On Comedy*, says that the people of Tiryns were so mirth-loving that they were useless in more serious business, and so they had recourse to the oracle at Delphi, desiring to be rid of that disability. The god gave answer to them that they should be freed if they sacrificed a bull to Poseidon by casting it into the sea without a smile. Fearing that they might fail to realize the promise of the oracle, they forbade the children to attend the sacrifice. But one boy learned what was going on, and mingling with the crowd he cried out just

as they were shouting and trying to drive him away, 'What's the matter with you? Are you afraid that I shall upset your victim [in Fontenelle's version: swallow your bull]?' They burst into laughter at this, and so learned in fact that the god meant to show them that an inveterate habit is desperately hard to cure" (*Deipnosophistae*, VI, 261, trans. Charles Burton Gulick [London: William Heinemann, and Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1929], 175–177). Rousseau apparently interprets Fontenelle's use of it as a satire of the French.

91. He may have in mind the superficial understanding of Homer manifested in Plato's *Ion*; however, properly speaking, Ion is an actor (rhapsode) rather than a pedant. More likely, he is thinking of the furious quarrel over the beauties or barbarity of Homer surrounding the translations published by Anne Dacier and Houdar de la Motte in 1711–1716. Cf. too Rousseau's sarcastic allusion to Homeric commentators at the beginning of his *Lettre à Grimm* (Pléiade, V, 261).

92. The Italian theater or Comédie Italienne, which played at the old Hôtel de Bourgogne, and was famous for its stock characters (of which these are examples) drawn from the *commedia dell'arte* tradition.

93. The opera, or Royal Academy of Music, performed at the Palais Royal; but there was also the *salle des machines* in the old Tuilleries palace, occasionally used for grandiose stage effects in the tradition of the *tragi-comédie*.

94. The Théâtre Français (Comédie Française), inheritor of Molière's mantle and tradition, in the Rue des Fossés St Germain (now Rue de l'Ancienne Comédie).

95. *La mort de Pompée* (1642) and *Sertorius* (1662) are two of Corneille's tragedies.

96. This is Molière's theory of the comic function, analogous to tragic catharsis, expressed in *La critique de "L'école des femmes"* and *L'impromptu de Versailles*.

97. *Le peintre* (the painter) was also a label Molière applied to himself.

98. There were benches for spectators on the two sides of the stage itself, constricting the movements of the actors, until a reform promoted by Voltaire and Lekain and sponsored by Lauraguais in 1759 (the time of the action at this point of the novel is 1736). This passage, interpreting some of the audience as participants in the comedy, is reminiscent of Montesquieu's satire of the theater in letter XXVIII of *Lettres persanes* (1721).

99. "Corrected" means that he pointed out foibles and thus contributed to improvement of manners: this formulation echoes indirectly the motto of the Italian comedy in Paris, later applied to the Comédie Française tradition, which was "Castigat ridendo mores."

100. "Melanthius, being asked what he thought of Dionysius's tragedy, said: 'I did not see it, it was so obfuscated by words'" (Montaigne *Essays*, III, 8; Frame, 714).

101. Voltaire, who was noted for his theatrical innovations and had taken his inspiration from Shakespeare in at least one instance, *La mort de César* (published in 1736, but not performed until 1743).

102. The convent of Port-Royal was the base of the Jansenist movement, known for its austere view of Christianity; Pascal, its major writer before Racine, writes in his *Pensées*: "Le moi est haïssable" ("The self is contemptible").

103. *On* in French: an impersonal, neuter, third-person pronoun.

104. The sacrifice of Polyxena, daughter of Hecuba and Priam, is related in Euripides' *Hecuba* and in Seneca's *Troad*; they emphasize her noble demeanor as she was executed.

105. French theatrical convention required that characters not be killed on stage.

106. The plays alluded to are Corneille's *Cinna, ou la clémence d'Auguste* (ca. 1641), his *La mort de Pompée* (1642), and Voltaire's *Alzire* (1736). The actors' names are those of members of the troupe at the Théâtre Français; however, although this takes place in 1736, Baron had in fact died in 1729 and Adrienne (Lecouvreur) in 1730.

107. "Comedian" is a general word for actor, both tragic and comic.

108. On spectators on the stage, see note 98 to p. 207.

109. Cornelia (Cornélie) in Corneille's *La mort de Pompée*; Cato from Prosper Crébillon's *Catalina* (1748); Brutus in Voltaire's *Brutus* (1730). A pannier was a barrel-shaped frame of whalebone used as part of ancient costume.

110. Prosper Crébillon (1674–1762) was the ranking French tragedian, along with Voltaire, in the first half of the eighteenth century.

111. His terminology of degradation recalls that of the *Discourse on Inequality*. Emile too enters Parisian society as a stranger in Book IV of *Emile*, but not, as here, under the thrall of an already contracted passion.

112. Marriage is not symmetrical. Cf. *Emile*: "It is important, then, not only that a woman be faithful, but that she be judged to be faithful by her husband, by those near her, by everyone. . . . If it is important that a father love his children, it is important that he esteem their mother. These are the reasons which put even appearance among the duties of women, and make honor and reputation no less indispensable to them than chastity" (Book V, Pléiade, IV, 698; Bloom, 361).

113. A contrived name ("Mr. Bower"), alluding to the *bosquet* (bower) at Clarens where they took their first kiss in letter I, XIV.

114. Nicolas Catinat (1637–1712) was one of Louis XIV's most distinguished officers; Fénelon (1651–1715) was archbishop of Cambrai and author, notably of the *Aventures de Télémaque* (published in 1699).

115. The beloved legend of Henri IV (1553–1610) carries the further connotation here that he was (at least originally) a Protestant.

116. This doubtless means that he holds a pension from the French crown.

117. Rousseau himself conceded a surprising predilection for France in the *Confessions*, coupled with a military sympathy which Julie too suggests: "in spite of me I felt a secret predilection for that same nation that I found to be servile, and for that government which I affected to criticize. What was funny was that, since I was ashamed of an inclination so contrary to my maxims, I did not dare admit it to anyone, and I scoffed at the French for their defeats, while my heart bled more than theirs" (Book V, *Collected Writings*, V, 153).

118. The German empire; the princes are the nine sovereign Electors.

119. François Louis de Pesmes, called Saint-Saphorin (1668–1737), whose origins were in the Pays de Vaud, made a military and diplomatic career principally in the service of Austria and England.

120. Different constructions of this note are possible; for example: had he been

capable of this misreading, he would no longer have been worthy of loving her. It is also a test of sorts, to sound out the reader's degree of sympathy with the moral premises of the work.

121. The word *épouseur* which Julie uses here is more familiar and humorous than "suitor," for a suitor might have the highest motivations, whereas an *épouseur* is shopping around for an advantageous marriage unrelated to sentiment.

122. Crouzas or more exactly Crousaz (Jean Pierre) published his refutation of the *Essay on Man* (*Examen de l'essai de Monsieur Pope sur l'homme*) in Lausanne in 1737; an English translation (*A Commentary on Mr. Pope's Principles of Morality, or Essay on Man)* appeared in 1739. Rousseau also belittles Crousaz's book in his letter to Voltaire of 18 August 1756 (*Collected Writings*, III, 12), asserting at that point that he has not read it.

123. "Nonchalance": Rousseau uses the Italian word because the noun *désinvolture* did not yet exist in French, although the adjective *désinvolte* did.

124. The "Gascon philosopher" means Montaigne: "And although the women of the great kingdom of Pegu, who have nothing to cover them below the waist, but a cloth slit in front and so narrow that whatever ceremonious modesty they seek to preserve, at each step they can be seen whole, may say that this is a device thought up in order to attract the men to them and divert them from their fondness for other males, to which that nation is altogether addicted, it might be said that they lose by it more than they gain and that a complete hunger is sharper than one that has been satisfied at least by the eyes" (*Essays*, III, 5; Frame, 654).

125. Rousseau evokes here a skill on which he prided himself; not only was he a patient and neat copyist of his own works (he made several copies by hand of *Julie*), he often sustained himself during his life by working as a copyist of music: this shows for example in the detailed article "Copiste" for the *Dictionnaire de musique* (Pléiade, V, 734–742).

126. *Ni galons ni taches* at first appears anomalous, since the ordinary sense of *galon* is galloon or fancy trim; but the real meaning here is etymological: "The word *galon* comes from pieces added to clothing, to cover its holes or stains: thus *galons* have become the ornament and decoration of the rich, after having been one of the signs of poverty" (*Encyclopédie* VII, 452).

127. The word *fard* properly means only white grease (or paint), but is used here for any kind of makeup; it also connotes cover-up and falsification.

128. That is, to a depth equivalent to four fingers' width.

129. The word *demoiselle* could be used for any unmarried girl of relatively high station, but in a narrow sense it properly designated only a noble daughter.

130. Similar observations are to be found in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert*: "In the large cities modesty is ignoble and base; it is the only thing a well brought-up woman would be ashamed of; and the honor of having made an honorable man blush belongs only to women of the highest fashion" (Pléiade, V, 79).

131. This passage is reminiscent of the tone of Montesquieu's *Lettres persanes*, for example this one from a letter from Usbek to Roxanne: "in this country . . . women have lost all restraint; they go before men with their faces uncovered, as if to request their own defeat; they seek them out with their gazes" (letter XXVI).

132. This expression comes from the stanza of Tasso already quoted in letter I, XXIII, 67.

133. Saint-Germain was still called a *faubourg* (suburb) because it had been outside the city when there were still walls. Les Halles was the central market place, next to the Marais.

134. Women of the Pays de Vaud.

135. "Their air is so modest . . . that a man is sometimes under a temptation of telling a woman that she is handsome, to have the pleasure of letting her know it" (*Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations* [London: Edlin and Prévost, 1726], 35).

136. *Grande loge* is not a customary term for the theater, where "first loge" would seem closer to the intended meaning; Rousseau may have accidentally borrowed it from the Freemasons, who had established their first *grande loge* in France in 1728.

137. These are clichés (*chaîne* and *flamme*) of conventional love rhetoric which to him, however, possess a true and authentic meaning but are no longer persuasive in Parisian society.

138. This passage recalls once again Montesquieu's satire of French morals in *Lettres persanes* (1721): "Here husbands accept their lot graciously and regard infidelities as the blows of an inevitable fate. A husband who wished to possess his wife all by himself would be regarded as a perturber of public joy and as a madman who wanted to enjoy the sun's rays to the exclusion of all other men" (letter LV). Julie's lover places himself in the role of Montesquieu's Persian, describing foreign customs with humor and detachment.

139. He imitates here the style of the libertine novelists such as Claude Crébillon or Charles Duclos: "It is chance that forms these sorts of liaisons; people take lovers because they are pleasing or well-suited to each other, and they part company because they cease to be so, and because everything must have an end" (Duclos, *Les Confessions du comte de ****, in *Romanciers du XVIII^e siècle* [Paris: Pléiade, 1965], II, 224).

140. By insisting on the complete *interchangeability* of love objects, Julie's lover is characterizing in extremely schematic form a position that is the antithesis of the romantic notion of love, which admits of but a single, irreplaceable loved one: "Love is not love / Which alters when it alteration finds" (Shakespeare, Sonnet 116).

141. That is, the "others" (or new lovers) enumerated in the previous paragraph.

142. This metaphor is based on the word *traits*, here translated as "quips," but which also means "arrows."

143. "Grimaces" are here analogous to a comic mask.

144. The word is *tailles*, the basic capitation tax in France, which fell almost entirely on the third estate.

145. "This war" in the note appears to mean the Seven Years' War of 1755–1762, the "other war" then being the War of Austrian Succession (1741–1748). The writer of the letter could not himself, circa 1736, be alluding to either of these wars; but the notes' author is the "editor," who refers here to his own time frame and not the novel's.

146. The provincial governance being invoked here placed great administrative

and even judicial powers in the hands of noble landholders; this will be further illustrated in the description of the Clarens estate in part V.

147. This is likely an allusion to Isaac Joseph Berruyer's *Histoire du peuple de Dieu* (History of God's people), 1727.

148. This programmatic passage, which is in effect a restatement of *Julie*'s own strategy, was reproduced word for word in Jaucourt's article *Roman* (Novel) in the *Encyclopédie*. Many of Rousseau's contemporary critics found morally reprehensible the idea of working toward virtue in literature by speaking from "the bosom of vice." That was, of course, the basic schema of confessional literature (more common in England than in France), to which tradition *Moll Flanders* for example is closely related.

149. They make better men than women (and thus confound the sexes), for they have forgotten the true nature of femininity as men have of masculinity. This assertion is thematically related to the remedially forceful sexual differentiation between the educations of Emile and Sophie: "Emile is a man and Sophie is a woman; therein consists all their glory. In the confounding of the sexes that reigns among us, someone is almost a prodigy for belonging to his own sex" (*Emile*, Book V, Pléiade, IV, 746; Bloom, 393).

150. Although the streets of the capital were confusing and hard to navigate, his mistake represents distraction on a comic scale, since not only are the two locations in question far apart, but the Rue de Tournon is on the left bank of the Seine (opposite the Palais du Luxembourg), whereas the Marais is on the right.

151. We have maintained the word "talisman" in its English cognate for its magical connotations, although the word also means "keepsake" and the article in question is (though never specifically identified as such) a locket with a miniature portrait inside.

152. This biblical allusion—the rending of the temple veil at Jesus' death (Matthew 27:51)—is curiously here used as a *positive* metaphor, the lifting of obstacles shrouding the real presence of the object.

153. This idea that the qualities associated with an immaterial soul should be unlimited by space may be influenced in part by current speculations regarding mysterious physical qualities of "animal magnetism."

154. Rousseau asserts in the *Confessions* that, as a foreigner, he was threatened with death, prison, or exile for his criticism of the French opera in his *Lettre sur la musique française* of 1753 (Book VIII, *Collected Writings*, V, 322–323). But Rousseau had also ridiculed the musicians of the orchestra in the *Lettre d'un symphoniste de l'Académie royale de musique* (Pléiade, V, 277–285), published about the same time.

155. The lines in question, from *The Dunciad* (III, 229–236), in fact describe not the French but the *English* theater:

He look'd, and saw a sable Sorc'rer rise,
Swift to whose hand a winged volume flies:
All sudden, Gorgons hiss, and Dragons glare,
And ten-horn'd fiends and Giants rush to war.
Hell rises, Heav'n descends, and dance on Earth,
Gods, imps, and monsters, music, rage, and mirth,
A fire, a jig, a battle, and a ball,
Till one wide Conflagration swallows all.

156. The *parterre* (pit) is the central, ground level of the audience where there were no seats: thus it is a synecdoche for those who have paid the lowest fare, constituting the lowest social component of the audience.

157. Caesar obliged Laberius to perform on stage the mimes he had written, whence this speech; the real source is not Aulus Gellius (the correction was subsequently made by Rousseau himself) but rather Macrobius (*Saturnalia*, II, 7).

158. The "new" knight (*chevalier moderne*) being alluded to is Chassé de Ponceau, who, having lost his fortune in the John Law debacle, performed at the Opera from 1720 to 1757.

159. The "machines" of the Opera were often described as creating a stupendous effect, analogous perhaps to the special effects of today's films; Rousseau's treatment not only reduces them to their mechanics (as Fontenelle had done in *Entretiens sur la pluralité des mondes*, 1686) but utterly denies their power of illusion.

160. A pun: *faire la bête* means both (literally) to impersonate an animal and (by extension, but more commonly) to be stupid. The Savoyard is a Parisian antonomasia for unskilled peasants (from Savoie) performing the most menial tasks.

161. This could be taken as a concrete illustration of his earlier affirmation that the Ancients "formerly accomplished great things with small means, and today we do just the opposite" (p. 49); cf. Malebranche: "What distinguishes [God's] wisdom and his power is not to accomplish small things by great means" (*Recherche de la vérité*, III, 6).

162. Philippe Quinault (1635–1688), dramatist, was author of numerous libretti (including *Roland*, *Alceste*, *Atys*, *Armide et Renaud*) set to music by Lully.

163. The Hebrew term had long since taken on superstitious extensions in French, and conventionally suggested a nocturnal gathering of witches.

164. *Le bûcheron* (Rousseau's note): the man who beats the measure, audibly, with a wooden baton: the term, which reappears in the *Confessions* (Book V, *Collected Writings*, V, 155) is borrowed from Friedrich Melchior Grimm, who compared the conductor to a woodcutter in *Le petit prophète de Boehmitschbroda*, published in 1753 (chap. IV).

165. That is, sense or sensitivity.

166. Timothy of Milet, who had added extra strings to his lyre, was required to remove them in order to enter a contest.

167. Short ballets or other interludes between acts in an opera.

168. A fast dance in double time.

169. The whole discussion that follows is predicated on the assumption of Rousseau's particular modification of the classical assumption that art has no ontological standing of its own, being but an imitation of reality. Rousseau extends this postulate in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* to argue that the art has no interest if the spectator does not readily identify what it purports to imitate.

170. The rigadoon (*rigaudon*) is a lively, gay dance in double time; the chaconne (Spanish *chacona*), like the minuet, is in triple time.

171. This term doubtless refers to libretti (*tragédies lyriques*), since the overall subject is still the opera-ballet.

172. Much of this paragraph is taken directly from Rousseau's *Dictionnaire de musique* which was to be published in 1767 (q.v. "Ballet," Pléiade, V, 648–650).

173. "I do not know how the *Opera*, with such perfect music and genuinely royal expenses, managed to bore me" (La Bruyère, *Les Caractères*, "Les ouvrages de l'esprit," no. 47).

174. Rouge or red: *rouge* means both.

175. *Nichées d'amours*, apparently referring to dimples; the *amours* could be either cupids or *putti*: his precious expression evokes their frequent appearance in rococo art such as the paintings of Boucher.

176. This detail is interesting in the history of "realist" narrative technique. Diderot makes its underlying principle explicit a few years later: "A painter executes a head on the canvas. All its forms are strong, grand and regular; it is the most perfect and rarest whole. . . . It is an ideal head; I can sense it, and say so to myself. But should the artist let me detect on the forehead of this head a light scar, a mole on one of its temples, an imperceptible cut on the lower lip; and instead of the ideal it was, instantly the head becomes a portrait; a smallpox mark in the corner of the eye or beside the nose, and this woman's face is no longer that of Venus, it is the portrait of one of my neighbors" (*Les deux amis de Bourbonne*, 1773). Diderot goes on to apply this lesson to the writing of fiction, which too must include such incidental details in order to be persuasive.

177. Marini, *Adone* (1623), III, 23.

178. The costume he brought her from his journey into the Valais, mentioned in letter I, XXIII.

179. The canton of Bern, well to the northeast of the Pays de Vaud, in central Switzerland.

180. Since they are countrymen, the guards in question are members of the Swiss or royal guard.

181. In other words, men who are colonels are usually also dukes or counts, etc., so they would not be called "Monsieur le Colonel"; the whole observation is meant to cast doubt on the "Colonel"'s existence.

182. His departure from this house, not related in the novel, is the subject of Rousseau's fourth engraving, entitled: "Shame and remorse avenge love profaned." In the *Confessions*, Rousseau compares one of his own experiences to the one evoked here: "I left the rue des Moineaux where this girl lodged just as ashamed as St. Preux was when he left the house where they got him drunk, and I recalled my story well while I was writing his" (Book VIII, *Collected Writings*, V, 298).

183. Presumably the note's sarcasm, couched in terms of a correction of Julie's provincial naiveté, means that although the term *petit-maître* (coxcomb)—but not *petite-maîtresse* (coquette)—may have gone out of style, the phenomenon itself has not disappeared; cf. glossary.

184. The *précieuses* had been around since the mid-seventeenth century, and were famously parodied by Molière in *Les précieuses ridicules*. They were principally characterized by the desire to substitute refined euphemisms for some of the banalities of daily language.

185. Italics, as encountered earlier, are a convention in epistolary novels for indicating a quotation from an earlier letter: here, letter II, XXVI, 242.

186. This remark recalls Rousseau's painful relation in the *Confessions* of the

shameful way he accused Marion, out of sheer embarrassment, of stealing a ribbon (Book II, *Collected Writings*, V, 70–71).

187. Cf. letter II, XVII, 203.

188. This is probably a suggestion that his recent experience related in letter II, XXVI, may have exposed him to venereal disease.

189. Claire referred in letter II, V, 168, to her father's consuming interest in politics; this is Julie's only mention of her uncle in the whole novel.

190. *C'est fait de ma vie*: she means she will pay with her life; as Julie indicated earlier (letter I, LIII, 119), she never doubted that if her proud and imperious father ever learned of her fornication, he would kill her.

Editors' Notes to Part III

1. Edward Bomston.

2. That is, Bomston.

3. According to a note in the *Discourse on Inequality* (*Collected Writings*, III, 91), there is a great difference in nature between *amour-propre*, which is purely social, and self-love (*amour de soi-même*); but at times, as here, *amour-propre* appears also to have a positive sense: the stoical pleasure of mastering oneself ("self-imposed deprivations").

4. Accumulation of water around the lungs: pleurisy.

5. Thus d'Étange confirms the very real implied threat expressed by Julie in letters I, LIII and II, XXVIII.

6. As his addressee perfectly understands, this is meant to be both an insult and a threat: a nobleman does not duel with a commoner, and can avenge himself only by using his servants or hiring an assassin.

7. No one has ever proposed a convincing decoding of these enigmatic initials, the only indication in the novel of this character's real name. There are two manuscript variants: on one there is no signature at all, and on another the initials are C.G.

8. This astrological term (*ascendant*) refers specifically to a phase of waxing dominance; by extension, it denotes one's zodiacal sign as a whole, or any celestial influence; figuratively: destiny or augury, natural inclination.

9. A medical notion: an extraordinary turmoil in the humors (bodily fluids).

10. That is, God.

11. See letter IV, V, 342.

12. High fever was characteristic of "confluent" smallpox, in which death occurred usually by day eleven (*Encyclopædia Britannica*, first ed., q.v. "Medicine").

13. The word "inoculated" was chosen intentionally. While smallpox inoculation was the subject of a major Enlightenment campaign, here the word refers not to vaccination but to infection. The etymological meaning of the word *inoculate* (taken from English into French) is to graft or implant, since the form of vaccination in this period was by implantation of a blister taken from a victim; in French a synonym of inoculation was *insertion*. The author of a published *Lettre d'un curé à M. Rousseau* described this letter on smallpox as "disgusting," a criticism others ap-

parently shared (quoted by Mercier in "Des écrits publiés à l'occasion de *La nouvelle Héloïse*," in the Poinçot edition of Rousseau's *Oeuvres complètes*, 1788–1789, IV, 461). In describing him as ill prepared, Claire apparently means that being weary and out of sorts, he was in poor shape for resisting the disease. This last phrase furnishes the caption for the fifth illustration specified by Rousseau: "The inoculation of love."

14. The once rebellious Julie yields, on one level, to social convention (she will speak at length of social order in letter III, XVIII), and on another to parental authority. The word "sacred" does not generally in this text express a specifically religious concept, but is rather the characters' way of solemnizing a power founded in nature and thus ultimately irresistible.

15. *Amie* (f.), i.e. Claire.

16. Julie's triangular proposition, although subtly veiled, is in fact highly specific; she will recall in letter III, XVIII, 290, that she has plotted here to commit adultery after her marriage.

17. Besides the temptation of suicide already invoked on more than one occasion, there are several instances in the novel where, as here, he dreams of inflicting a violent death on them both so they can be reunited in the throes of death.

18. They only spent one night together; thus he doubtless refers to the night spent with Julie (letter I, LIII–LV), and not to sex as such, which they experienced more than once.

19. Rousseau is not alone in making observations of the sort found in his footnote here. "Today, in France, the women think it is incumbent on their honor to have affairs; they are so persuaded of this that they wish at least to appear to when they do not. . . . Attention to their reputation formerly obliged them to keep their intrigues secret; the same motive now commits them to seeking notoriety" (Jean Bernard Leblanc, *Letters of a Frenchman Concerning the Government, Politics and Mores of the English and French* [Amsterdam, 1751], II, 284).

20. See Julie's later commentary on this subject in letter III, XVIII, 296.

21. Julie, who in her emotion after the smallpox episode had reverted to addressing him as *tu* in her last letter (III, XV), now definitively resumes the more formal *vous*.

22. See chronology, appendix III.

23. The "editor" in his footnote may be thinking of the early part of *Clarissa*, where Clarissa defends Lovelace while denying she feels any love for him—on which subject Anne Howe, her correspondent, teases her (her own word): see for example letter 37 (original edition).

24. This surprising statement requires a close rereading of the earliest letters, which reveal meanings that to most readers would hardly have been initially obvious. The reference is to the second and third "Notes" in part I (p. 31) where Julie wrote: "a man such as you have feigned to be does not go; he does more than that": it must now be understood that she was asking him to die, and his reply—"Tomorrow you shall be content, and whatever you may say about it, I will have done less than go"—assures her of his "obedience"; hence her panicky reply then, on which she comments now.

25. Rousseau recalls this line in the *Confessions* to affirm that his experience with

Sophie d'Houdetot in 1756–1757 was an example to the contrary (Book IX, *Collected Writings*, V, 373).

26. Letter I, XIV.

27. It has usually been assumed that this refers to Russia.

28. "Quality" has, as the rest of the sentence makes clear, two complementary meanings here: it means both quality in the everyday sense and nobility of birth in the specific sense that importantly involves d'Étange's personal ethic.

29. *Je vous vis, je fus guérie, et je péris*: this rhetorical structure—a sequence of three lapidary, alliterative preterites with rhymes in *i*—is a distant echo of Julius Caesar's *Veni, vidi, vici*, and more proximately of Racine's "Je le vis, je rougis, je pâlis à sa vue" (*Phèdre*, I, 3).

30. That is, as long as it hurts it must not be getting gangrene, which is the worst of his fears.

31. Perret is the name of a real minister mentioned in *Confessions* (Book V, *Collected Writings*, V, 166).

32. Although "crime" sounds rather formal in English, it is the best parallel for the French *crime* insofar as Julie consistently avoids the religious term *péché* (sin) which one might often expect; in the same way, we maintain "fault" for her term *faute* which suggests, and yet avoids, the notion of sin.

33. See letter II, XI, 186.

34. This is one of the many very pointed mentions of the risk of death, which make it quite clear that Julie never doubted her father would kill her had he known what her mother did; cf. note to letter II, XXVIII, 251.

35. That is, holding over her the power of life and death, he was free to take her life.

36. This is the subject Rousseau prescribed for the sixth illustration, "Paternal force."

37. These particulars would seem indeed to make Wolmar a Russian. The "latest revolution" would have to be that of 1741, even though in the novel's chronology the marriage must take place by 1738. William Acher has suggested various possible sources for Wolmar in "Sources cosmopolites de M. de Wolmar," *Revue d'Histoire Littéraire de la France* 80.3 (1980), 366–383.

38. That is, pecuniary and class interests, the supposition that he no longer wants Wolmar as a relation because he is now penniless.

39. Such terms evoke the high noble ethic quintessentially expressed, in the seventeenth century, in the tragedies of Pierre Corneille.

40. *Intempéries*: turmoil or disequilibrium of the humors.

41. Letter III, XII.

42. *Vous vîntes, je vous vis*: another echo of Caesar's *Veni, vidi, vici* (cf. letter III, XVIII, 282).

43. See letter III, XV, 275–276.

44. These expressions are much like those of Des Grieux: "If it is true that heavenly assistance is at every moment equal in strength to the passions, then may someone explain to me by what fatal influence one is suddenly carried far from one's duty, without being able to offer the least resistance, or feeling the slightest remorse" (Antoine Prévost, *Manon Lescaut*, 1731).

45. From the novel's chronology, her mourning appears to have lasted about a year.

46. "Temple" suggests the metaphor of an Old Testament sacrifice; but in any case Protestants generally eschewed the term for church used by the Catholics (*église*) and have always tended to refer to their churches by the term *temple*.

47. Etymological sense of *révolution*: a complete turn-around, actually a physiological term for a change in humors, implying here a miraculous cure.

48. The change in Julie's terminological categories is dramatic: as long as she employed the rhetoric of love, duty and nature were always opposed; now they are not only reconciled but both serve as arguments against passion.

49. The Savoyard vicar in *Emile* calls marriage "the first and the holiest institution of nature" (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 566; Bloom, 267).

50. "Another lover" of course makes no sense in the rhetoric of love. This astonishing series of questions suggests that a *desire* subsequent to *love* might have been satisfied by other persons, and in so doing obviously represents the substitution of a new, sceptical discourse for the blissful one to which characters and reader were accustomed in parts I and II.

51. Julie's destruction of the amorous ideal continues, here evoking a notion of inherent inconstancy of desire that Diderot expressed several times, notably in *Jacques le fataliste* (1771): "The first vow made by two fleshly beings took place at the foot of a rock crumbling into dust; as witness to their constancy they called on a firmament which never remains for an instant the same; all was changing in them and around them and they believed their hearts freed from vicissitudes" (*Oeuvres romanesques*, [Paris: Garnier, 1962], 604).

52. Julie introduces here the new vocabulary, which emphasizes, in place of love's fury and exclusivity, communal values of order.

53. That is, mobile beacons instead of the fixed ones they were taken for; the phrase (*feux errants*) may refer to lights aboard boats to show their position, which move about, in contrast to *feux fixes* or stationary lights on the shore. There could be, however, an allusion to the French versions of the Aristotelian designations *feux passagers* for comets and *étoiles errantes* for non-fixed stars (i.e., planets).

54. That the essence of God is being itself is in the exegetical tradition; Julie is perhaps thinking also of the "I am," which was one the names of God in the Hebrew bible (cf. Exodus 3:13–14).

55. A similar proposition was put forth by Usbek in Montesquieu's *Persian Letters* (1721): "Thus, were there no God, we still ought to love Justice; that is, attempt to be like that being of whom we have so beautiful an idea, and who, if he existed, would necessarily be just" (letter LXXXIII). Julie goes farther than Pascal, who merely wanted to prove that if God did not exist the believer has nothing to lose by believing in Him: "If you win [the wager], you win everything; if you lose, you lose nothing." (Brunschvicg no. 233).

56. These accusations go well beyond the kind of relativist discourse about morals that one finds, for example, in Helvétius, one of whose chapters of *De l'esprit* (1758) is entitled "On the virtues of prejudice, and on true virtues" (second discourse, chap. XIV). But Helvétius situates his remarks in the context of examples taken from other cultures, in some of which what the French call *libertinage* is permissible or even approved. But since it is all but unthinkable that opinions even

resembling those Julie cites could be published, Rousseau probably had in mind not written but oral arguments he had heard. In the *Confessions* he gives an example of one such "philosopher" in the person of M. de Tavel, who had inculcated such "principles" in Mme de Warens: "M. de Tavel, her first lover, was her philosophy teacher, and the principles he gave her were the ones he needed to seduce her. Finding her attached to her husband, to her duties, always cold, reasoning, and unassailable by means of the senses, he attacked her by means of sophisms, and succeeded in showing her the duties to which she was so attached as a prattle of catechism, made solely to amuse children, the union of the sexes as an act the most indifferent in itself, conjugal fidelity as an obligatory appearance whose entire morality concerned opinion, the peace of mind of husbands as the only rule of women's duty, so that unknown infidelities—nonexistent for the one they offend—were also nonexistent for the conscience; in sum, he persuaded her that the thing in itself was nothing, that it acquired existence only from the scandal, and that every woman who appeared chaste was so in fact from that alone" (*Confessions*, *Collected Writings*, V, 165–166).

57. Clandestine marriages could be both legally and religiously valid, as an authorized exception to the usual requirement of published bans (civil ceremonies did not exist in France until the Revolution).

58. The verb *to sin* is rarely used in *Julie*, but it can be seen that even here it is given a definition that is social and not theological.

59. This discussion relates to the traditional notion that blood, literally and physically, carries with it the voice of nature and the inner attraction of natural relationships; thus a substitute sibling, even a half-sibling as the case described might be, could never feel the full force of fraternal bonds.

60. The tactful ambiguity of Julie's terminology is such that one cannot be completely sure whether Julie refers simply to the precarious precautions lovers take to meet in secret, or rather to the uncertainty of contraceptive measures, which "Heaven" foils since they are used only in sinful situations.

61. Essentially the same thought is developed in *Emile*: "If there is a frightful condition in the world, it is that of the unhappy father who, lacking confidence in his wife, does not dare to yield to the sweetest sentiments of his heart, who wonders, in embracing his child, whether he is embracing another's, the token of his dishonor, the plunderer of his own children's property" (Book V, Pléiade, IV, 698; Bloom, 361).

62. Helvétius's *De l'esprit* (1758) has been cited as a possible source for the opinions being refuted by Julie, but his argument is merely an economic one in the context of luxury spending by *femmes galantes* (second discourse, chap. XV). In fact, such opinions much resemble the attitude of Mme de Warens as related in the *Confessions*: "She always believed that nothing attached a man to a woman as much as possession, and although she loved her friends only with friendship, it was with such a tender friendship that she used all the means that depended on her to attach them more strongly" (*Collected Writings*, V, 166).

63. The image of Prometheus receiving the divine fire—which could become damaging to mankind—was the subject of the frontispiece to the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*; cf. *Collected Writings*, I, 12.

64. *Philosophie en paroles*; cf. the expression "prating philosophy" (*philosophie parlière*) in letter I, LXV, 149.

65. In the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar," Rousseau puts forward an argument for the existence of God based on the same reasoning: because it is intolerable that evil should ultimately prevail, there must be a God who in the afterlife will set things aright: "I do not say that the good will be recompensed. . . . Nevertheless they suffered in this life; therefore they will be compensated in another. This sentiment is founded less on the merit of man than on the notion of goodness which seems to me inseparable from the divine essence" (*Emile*, Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 591; Bloom, 284).

66. Their love has by the novel's chronology lasted about six years, and more than two have passed since they separated.

67. Since Julie cites from memory, she makes some slight mistakes in wording compared with the original text in letter I, XXIV, 70.

68. This principle of the infallibility of the conscience is reiterated in the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar" (*Emile*, Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 594; Bloom, 286).

69. The protagonist very pointedly, after just lapsing for a moment into the familiar *tu*, uses for the first time this formal appellation that recognizes Julie as a woman whose intimacy he can no longer claim.

70. In other words, he will die even sooner, since her happiness alone ties him to life.

71. The most famous precedent in literature for a wife's confession of another love to her husband is that of Mme de Lafayette's eponymous Princesse de Clèves (1678): but her confession concerned the present, not the past, and there had been no "fall" of which a repetition was to be prevented.

72. The "abuse of freedom" is what a liaison would be previous to a girl's marriage.

73. The term "officer" in the note is not military here but designates rather an *officier de bouche*, the servant in charge of the *office* or pantry.

74. Similarly, the preceptor in *Emile*, lengthily explaining to Sophie and Emile the difference between love and marriage, interrupts the former in order to prepare the latter: "I have often thought that if one could prolong the happiness of love in marriage, one would have paradise on earth. Up to now, that has never been seen" (Book V, Pléiade, IV, 861; Bloom, 476).

75. "There is scarcely a couple which is not ashamed to have loved each other, once they no longer do" (La Rochefoucauld, maxim 71 in the complete edition of 1678). La Rochefoucauld's worldly cynicism would seem to preclude the sort of generous emotions Julie is arguing for.

76. The notion of recovery or cure (*guérison*) will be a concept central to the remaining plot.

77. Variant. The following note was added here in the Rey edition of 1763 and the Duchesne edition of 1764: "Our diverse situations determine and change in spite of us the affections of our hearts: we will be vicious and mean as long as it is in our interest to be, and unfortunately the chains we bear multiply this interest about us. The effort to correct the disorder of our desires is almost always vain, and

very rarely is it genuine: what must be changed is less our desires than the situations that produce them. If we wish to be become good let us do away with relations that keep us from doing so, there is no other way. For nothing in the world would I wish to have title to another's inheritance, especially that of persons I must cherish, for who knows what horrible hope indigence could wrest from me? Upon this principle examine well Julie's intention and the declaration she makes of it to her friend. Weigh this intention in all its circumstances, and you will see how a righteous heart unsure of itself is able if so required to purge itself of all interest contrary to duty. From this moment Julie despite the love she still retains places her senses on the side of virtue; she forces herself, so to speak, to love Wolmar as her sole spouse, as the only man with whom she will ever live; she changes the secret interest she had in losing him into an interest in preserving him. Either I know nothing of the human heart, or the triumph of virtue in all the rest of Julie's life, and the sincere and constant attachment she holds to the end for her husband, depend entirely on this much-criticized resolution." Rousseau returned to this subject in his *Confessions* when he argued that he would accept an annuity but not a legacy from the Marshall of Luxembourg in order never to have mixed feelings about his eventual demise (Book II, *Collected Writings*, V, 47).

78. She appears to mean that if Wolmar suspected nothing of her past affair she would have been able to keep it going.

79. Diderot placed this remark in the mouth of the blind Saunderson in his *Lettre sur les aveugles* ("Letter on the Blind") of 1749; his source was doubtless Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* (II, XIII, §19). In Diderot, the example is used to show that the concept of God as creator of the world does not explain the world, but on the contrary, God is himself inexplicable.

80. This remark is attributed by Plutarch to Themistocles (xxix), reflecting on the splendor of his table. North translates: "My sons, we should have been undone if we had not been undone," which presumably means: we would now have been undone (by the temptations before us) if we had not been undone already.

81. As a novelistic device the allusion to tear-stained paper calls attention to the materiality of epistolary exchange, and the fact that letters can signify not only with their words but through such "paratextual" indices as paper, handwriting, etc.

82. Between letters III, XX and III, XXI, falls an interval of about two years.

83. Johann Robeck published a thesis on suicide in Sweden in 1736 and drowned himself in 1739.

84. This argument is very similar to Cleveland's meditation on suicide in Book VI of *Le philosophe anglais*: "By allowing me to fall into such extreme misfortune and suffering, [God] has excepted me from the number of those he sentences to a long life. It is impossible that being by essence infinitely good, he should take pleasure in seeing me drag out a miserable life. The very excess of my woes is a clear and intelligible sign that he allows me to die."

85. This is a paraphrase of Socrates' comparison in his discussion with Cebes (Plato, *Phaedo*, 62b–e).

86. The point of the question, which is in the opening pages of the *Phaedo*, Socrates' last dialogue with certain of his disciples, is that since men belong to the gods they are not free to take their own lives.

87. Although the right to suicide is indeed dealt with only briefly in the *Phaedo*, it relates to the general theme of the work, which is the immortality of the soul and the rationality of desiring death.

88. Plutarch is not so specific in identifying the text, but does say that Cato read Plato's dialogues "treating of the soul" twice over. Cato also complained that his friends and family were trying to prevent his suicide by taking his sword rather than by reasoning with him (*Life of Cato Utican*, North trans.).

89. Cicero, *Tusculanae disputationes*, II, 25.

90. Pliny the Younger relates that Arria, condemned to death by Claudius, plunged a dagger into her breast and then handed it to her husband, saying, "It does not hurt, Paetus" (*Letters*, Book III, letter XVI). Empona hid her condemned husband, Sabinus, who had feigned death, underground for a year and even bore him children; finally she was executed by Vespasian (Plutarch, *Eroticus*). The chaste Lucretia was raped at sword point by Sextus; the next day, she summoned her husband, Collatinus, and demanded revenge before stabbing herself (Livy, I, 68). In 1754 Rousseau had begun a tragedy, *La mort de Lucrèce* (Pléiade, II, 1019–1046; cf. *Confessions*, Book VIII, *Collected Writings* V, 331), which would have had some analogies to *Julie* because his Lucretia is in love with Sextus but chooses her husband and virtue.

91. Heads of the republican party that assassinated Julius Caesar: defeated by Mark Anthony and Octavius, they committed suicide.

92. That is, for having preferred suicide to submission.

93. Rousseau knew the surgeon Parisot from his visits to Lyon: cf. *Confessions*, Book VII, *Collected Writings*, V, 236.

94. That is, to assuage the pain caused by kidney stones.

95. A state of calm and passivity.

96. Lactantius Firmianus was tutor to Constantine's son and author of *Divinarum institutionum libri septem*; the writer is perhaps alluding to another work attributed to him, *De mortibus persecutorum* (On the death of persecutors). St. Augustine (354–430 C.E.) discusses the subject in *The City of God* (Book I, chap. XX).

97. Samson had been blinded after being seduced by Delilah. Subsequently, with strength from God, he brought down the pillars of the temple and thus killed, along with himself, three thousand Philistines (Judges 16:28–30).

98. The Ten Commandments.

99. This alludes to Edward's story separately related in the "The Loves of Milord Edward Bomston," appendix I.

100. Cf. letter I, LIV.

101. This sarcastic contrast between his friend and the "righteous man" who suffers is probably an allusion to Job (also called "a perfect and upright man" in the Book of Job 1:8 and 2:3), who after suffering overwhelming losses wishes to die.

102. A Cartesian expression, for the body but not the soul could, according to Descartes, be explained mechanically.

103. Simple as opposed to compound: the soul is not made up of other parts but is a pure essence.

104. In Plato's *Crito*, 50^{c}–51^{c}.

105. Prisoner of the Carthaginians in the first Punic War, Regulus was sent by

them to Rome to negotiate peace, under oath to return if he failed; confident of Rome's victory, he instead plead for war, but also honored his word and was tortured to death by the Carthaginians.

106. Ignominiously trapped at the Caudine Forks by the Samnites, the consul Posthumius was required to make his whole army pass under the yoke (Livy IX, i–vi).

107. Varro, defeated at Cannae by Hannibal, managed to regroup part of his scattered army; he was greeted by a crowd and thanked for not despairing of the republic.

108. Kensington, on the western side of London, was a royal residence.

109. The "valets" are obsequious courtly nobility.

110. Peace of mind (*repos*) is a key concept in classical French theology and metaphysics, and informs, for example, the Princesse de Clèves's decision not to marry Nemours in Lafayette's novel of 1678. Here, Bomston's psychological strategy is based on a symmetrical metaphor: the half of the lover's heart that was captured by Julie is to be freed from her grasp by the attractive power of wondrous external objects, as a result of which the whole heart—and self—can be made whole again.

111. The Pacific. George Anson and his fleet left London in September 1740 to circle the globe. England having just declared war on Spain, his initial mission was to attack Spanish ports in South America.

112. The Strait of Le Maire is between Tierra del Fuego and the Isla de los Estados (in English called Staten Island), en route for Cape Horn.

Editors' Notes to Part IV

1. According to the novel's internal chronology, we are now in early 1744, and the cousins are about twenty-eight years old. Julie was married in 1738; her former lover set out with the Anson expedition in the fall of 1740.

2. Claire also will later allude to difficulties with her family in letter IV, II, 334–335.

3. Plutarch relates how, when two architects were being evaluated for a project, the first moved the people with his speech, and the second simply said, "Athenians, what he said I will do" (*Praecepta gerendae reipublicae* [Precepts for public administration], chap. V; the anecdote is also in Montaigne, Book I, chap. XXVI).

4. Cf. letter IV, I, 328.

5. This is never more fully explained, though Julie's elder son is consistently referred to as *le petit mali*, with a child's mispronunciation of *mari* (husband); cf. below, letter IV, IX, 362. The child referred to as "mali" is never given any other name in the novel.

6. See letter II, V.

7. By order of the king, all the Egyptian children born the same day as his son Sesostris were brought together and raised together with him so that, as his companions, they would be loyal and brave in war (Diodorus of Sicily, *Historical Library*, I, liii).

8. Another name for the Pacific Ocean.

9. Petrarch, sonnet "Fresco ombroso fiorito et verdu colle"; Durling, 404.

10. The "equinoctial line," another term for the Equator.

11. Uncertain reference: the four corners (as on a map), the four compass points, or perhaps the four known continents.

12. Anson had circled Cape Horn; destroyed Paita, a Peruvian port; attacked the Spanish ships plying the route between the Philippines and America; and returned to England in June 1744 after circling the globe. Richard Walter's *A Voyage Round the World* describing it was published in 1745, and a French translation in 1749.

13. The Pacific Ocean, of course, though there is no capital letter in Rousseau's text.

14. Tasso, *Jerusalem Delivered*, III, 4, trans. Edward Fairfax.

15. The note can be explained by the widespread belief (begun, according to the *Encyclopédie*, by Magellan) that the Patagonians were enormous.

16. There appears to be a minor confusion here between Juan Fernandez, an island where Anson's fleet put in for three months, and Tinian, where it spent only fifty days (both will be mentioned in letter IV, XI): the latter remained uninhabited following the Spanish eviction of its inhabitants.

17. The Aztecs and the Incas.

18. Anson's squadron burned the city of Paita in November 1741, after its Spanish defenders had fled.

19. Spain.

20. The image of China varied in Rousseau's time between that of an atheistic and immoral society and that of a highly refined civilization (the view of the Jesuit missionaries, further popularized by Voltaire). The view expressed here is the same as in the *Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts*: "There is no vice that does not dominate them, no crime with which they are not familiar" (*Collected Writings*, II, 8).

21. Near the Philippines, Anson captured a Spanish galleon carrying a shipment of gold.

22. He means Holland, which had established a settlement at Capetown in the seventeenth century.

23. Although this is presented by him as a mere sample to whet Claire's appetite for the full story, it is practically all that will ever be related in his letters.

24. In other words, Julie has gone ahead, despite Claire's warnings, with her confession to Wolmar.

25. The exact meaning of this name is unknown, as is the name they would have used with him up to the point in part III to which Rousseau refers (letter III, XIV, 272). The name could derive from the jocular combination of the title of saint with a mock-heroic notion of chivalric prowess (*preux* = valiant); this would be consistent with the fact that Julie once playfully "dubbed" him *vassal unique et loyal Chevalier* ("sole [unique] vassal and loyal Knight," letter I, XXXV, 91). On the other hand, particularly since almost all the important names of characters here are names of places, Preux [prø] may simply derive from St. Prex (pronounced [pre]), a village in the Vaud (cf. Pierre Sage, *Le bon prêtre dans la littérature française* [Geneva: Droz, 1951], 248); there was a Preux family in Lausanne in the eighteenth century.

26. Probably an allusion to his eviction from Vevey at the end of part I, of which Claire was the principal instrument.

27. This problem of sorting out confused impressions in order to make a coher-

ent narrative of them is a recurrent theme in Prévost's novels of the 1730s, and is also found elsewhere in Rousseau: "So many charming images intoxicate me that I bring them together without order and without coherence; the delirium they cause prevents me from connecting them" (*Emile*, V, 790; Bloom, 424); "in the midst of all this emotion I do not see anything clearly; I cannot write a single word, I have to wait. Insensibly this great motion subsides, this chaos sorts itself out; each thing comes to put itself in its place, but slowly and after a long and confused agitation" (*Confessions*, *Collected Writings*, V, 95).

28. One would expect "shore," but "coast" is the term still used by the Swiss along the lake.

29. This is the moment chosen by Rousseau for engraving number 7, which he entitled "The confidence of beautiful souls."

30. Compare this passage from the *Confessions*, when Rousseau returns to Mme de Warens's house: "There was the question of my lodging. She consulted her chambermaid. I did not dare to breathe during this deliberation; but when I heard that I would sleep in the house I could barely contain myself, and I saw my little bundle carried into the room destined for me almost as St. Preux saw his carriage put up at Mme de Wolmar's home" (*Collected Writings*, V, 87).

31. Cf. Rousseau's description of Mme de Warens when he returns to her house in Book V of the *Confessions*: "In the five or six years since I had experienced such sweet transports at the first sight of her, she had really changed very little, and to me did not appear to have changed at all. . . . Only her waist had acquired a little more roundness. For the rest it was the same eye, the same complexion, the same bosom, the same features, the same beautiful blond hair, the same gaiety, all the way to the same voice" (*Collected Writings*, V, 163–64).

32. *Amie*, (f.), i.e. "hers."

33. Wolmar's rule contrasts interestingly with Julie's "sure rule" given in letter III, XVIII, 300, which is to trust one's conscience. Its formulation is highly reminiscent of the Golden Rule, and its purpose too is similar; but there is a fundamental difference in that it is based on transparency (i.e., everyone will know) rather than reciprocity (gratitude for kindness, or fear of reprisal).

34. When a worker proposed to modify the house of Livius Drusus at the cost of only five talents so as better to shield his life from public view, he answered that he would pay ten to have it made transparent, so that everyone could see how he lived (Plutarch, *Praecepta gerendæ reipublicae*, chap. IV); the anecdote is repeated by Montaigne (*Essays*, III, 2).

35. The *esprit de système* or systematic thought, translated here as "being doctrinaire," was a major target of empirical philosophy: typified by Descartes, it implied deductive and theoretical philosophical constructions that resisted accommodation of new empirical evidence.

36. In fact the explanation is left to Julie in an extract from the "suppressed" letter: see letter V, VII, note, 495. As Julie's reply intuits, it relates to her father.

37. Dark from exposure to the elements, or sunburnt.

38. The term is *crotu*, perhaps a local variant of *croûteux* or scabby: allusion to his contraction of the smallpox in part III.

39. This expression appears to be an equivalent for the Equator or the ecliptic: he earlier said he had four times "crossed the line" (letter IV, III, 338).

40. That is, Claire infers from Julie's choice of the word "study" that she is no longer in love with him.

41. The gist of this dense sentence is that he will appear more changed to Claire than he did to Julie, though Julie would not see this had she not herself changed.

42. This symbolic chastity contrasts with St. Preux's expression of pleasure at sleeping under the same roof with Julie (letter III, VI, 343).

43. This assumes that the norm was for the hat *not* to be worn on the head, but carried under the arm; and in contrast to this custom it became stylish actually to wear it on top of one's wig.

44. *Boîte* (box) was a faddish name for *tabatière* (snuffbox).

45. She considers it abnormal for an elegant gentleman to spend an evening by the fire with the womenfolk; St. Preux's almost boorish manners are recited paradoxically here by Claire to underscore his genuineness.

46. St. Preux's failure to pay attention to Madame Belon is the subject of letters I, XXXIII–XXXIV.

47. Julie's "avarice" is moral, for having hoarded St. Preux: see beginning of letter IV, VII, 351.

48. *Mali* (for *mari*): cf. letter IV, II, 333.

49. The *petite-* is affectionate; cf. letter VI, XIV, 521, and note.

50. The island was alluded to earlier without being named; see letter IV, III, 339, and note.

51. He refers to the manner of constructing consecutive rooms (*enfilade*) without a separate corridor, so that one had to pass through all of them to reach the end.

52. Cf. letter III, XX, 305: this domestic esthetics is echoed in a passage from Book III of the *Confessions* describing the house of Mme de Warens, characterized by "a patriarchal abundance with which ostentation is never united" (*Collected Writings*, V, 88).

53. These are ideas that Rousseau shares with the Physiocrats, for whom land, essentially inexhaustible, was the source of all true wealth. They thus complement the theory of the city (letter II, XVI, 198–199) where the same mechanism works exactly in reverse: the greater the concentration of population, the more things decline.

54. Thirty *batz* make a *thaler*, the monetary unit of Bern, in the jurisdiction of which Clarens is located.

55. Cf. "People can resist anything, except kindness, and there is no means surer of acquiring the affection of others than to give them one's own" (II, V, 166).

56. *L.L.E.E.* = *Leurs Excellences*, the Bern senate, which governed the Pays de Vaud.

57. The idea that members of opposite sexes should not spend too much time together is also developed in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* (Pléiade, V, 81–82).

58. Ancient name of Sparta, the legislation of which, promulgated by Lycurgus and described by Plutarch, was much admired by Rousseau: spouses there had to contrive, according to Plutarch, "means and occasions how they might meet together, and not be seen" (Thomas North trans., Blackwell edition, 1928, I, 131).

59. There is a very similar passage in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert*: "in Paris, every woman assembles in her apartment a harem of men more feminine than she, who . . . forever constrained in these voluntary prisons, get up, sit down again, go and come endlessly to the fireplace, to the window, pick up and put down a firescreen a hundred times, turn and pirouette about the room, whilst the only active part of the idol, stretched out motionless on her lounge chair, is her tongue and eyes. Whence this difference, if not that nature, which imposes on women a sedentary and home-loving life, prescribes for men an entirely different one, and that this restlessness indicates a real need of theirs?" (Pléiade V, 93).

60. The *parterre* or ground level in the French theater had no seating.

61. St. Preux's wish to be admitted to favors refused to Wolmar has, of course, great symbolic importance. Equally striking here is the unexpected way he compares his prerogatives to those of a lackey, an echo of his earlier station in Julie's father's house, which he finally seems to have outgrown.

62. *Céracée* is curds, and *gru* curds mixed with cream. The Salève referred to in the note is just southeast of Geneva (in Savoie), therefore at the other end of the lake from Clarens. The Jura is the mountainous area to the north and west of Geneva.

63. Allusion to letter I, XXIII, 66.

64. In picking up on Julie's allusion (see previous note), St. Preux has slightly shifted the subject to make one of his own. Instead of contrasting the Valaisans and the women of Clarens, he pairs the symbolism of the chalet, which connotes dairy products (cf. letter I, XXXVI, 92 and Rousseau's note) and the cellar, which connotes wine; but he thereby also alludes to their tryst for which the chalet stood, and the drunkenness for which she reproached him.

65. The possible relationship between aspects of the English character and red meat is also suggested in *Emile* where Rousseau asserts that in England "great villains harden themselves to murder by drinking blood" (Book II, Pléiade, IV, 411; Bloom, 153).

66. Pythagoras abstained from wine and flesh of all kinds; Plutarch is quoted at length on this subject in Book II of *Emile* (Pléiade, IV, 412–414; Bloom, 152–153).

67. This doctrine is elaborated at the beginning Book V of *Emile*: "One ought to be active and strong, the other passive and weak; one must necessarily will and be able; it suffices that the other put up little resistance" (Pléiade, IV, 693; Bloom, 358).

68. Cf. note 161 to letter II, XXIII, 332.

69. Fifty *écus* in Geneva or France are 150 *livres* (pounds); but in fact *écus* were not in use in the Vaud.

70. This comment reflects deep Calvinist suspicions about dance, which was forbidden in Geneva at the time of Rousseau's youth.

71. Whichever text was actually composed first, most of this paragraph and all of the next one are indeed repeated in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert on the Theatre*, 1758 (Pléiade, V, 116–117). Any reader who recognized the argument from having read the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* would have to conclude either that Rousseau "plagiarized" St. Preux in the *Letter* or that St. Preux is a fiction of Rousseau's, which would demolish the novel's carefully maintained ambiguous status. Thus this explanation

after the fact that he earlier was "quoting" St. Preux is intricately tied up with *Julie*'s possible claim to authentic status.

72. Although this "infusion" is of course metaphorical, it is also almost literally what St. Preux imagines: that a kind of spiritual fluid flows out from Julie to fill others: cf. letter II, VI, 166.

73. The terminology of this phrase is significant, for although Rousseau never assumes (as the *Discourse on Inequality* shows) that human society can revert in time to its more innocent state, there is always a sense in which it can hope to recapture some of the unspoiled qualities that the state of nature evokes.

74. See note 79 to letter I, XXXVI, 91.

75. There is no known printed source for this maxim, but it has more than one attributed source and he may well have heard it quoted. In essence, it is similar to Montaigne's "Few men have been admired by their domestics" (*Essays* III, 2), and the English version, "No one is hero to his valet."

76. *Grands jours* refers to an assize or assembly of judges who come to the outlying provinces to hear cases.

77. The plural is in the French, and probably indicates a passage from the singular to a generalization: the whole paragraph passes here into the plural.

78. The *Roman de la rose* had been revived by an adaptation in modern French in 1735 by Lenglet-Dufresnoy, of which the text is:

Car Richesse ne fait pas riche
Celui qui en trésor la fiche,
Mais suffisance seulement
Fait homme vivre richement. (vv. 5191–5194)

One could translate: "Wealth does not enrich the one who puts it in money; for self-sufficiency alone makes men live richly."

79. The origin and statute of property are important subjects treated in part II of the *Discourse on Inequality* (see *Collected Writings*, III, 48–55) and in the *Social Contract* (Book I, chap. IX, *Collected Writings*, IV, 142–144). *Propriété* also meant property.

80. Rousseau remembers this thought, or something very similar to it, in the *Rêveries*: "What do we enjoy in such a situation? Nothing external to ourselves, nothing if not ourselves and our own existence, like God" (Fifth Walk, Pléiade, I, 1047; Butterworth, 69).

81. He will return to these subjects in letter V, 11.

82. At the beginning of the letter St. Preux said it had something to do with a future project of Edward's, perhaps concerning him. If that project were to have St. Preux oversee his own properties in England, then the length and ostentatious systematicity of this letter might be taken as St. Preux's attempt to persuade Edward that he has acquired all the wisdom necessary for the undertaking of managerial responsibilities in the master's name.

83. Elysium in Greek mythology is the abode of the good after death.

84. See note 16 to letter IV, III, 339, where these islands were alluded to without being named.

85. Julie has been married for six years, and the garden was begun well before that.

86. A kind of nightwatch, an ornamental vine common in Europe.

87. The crown is an effect of pruning the branches back to the top of the trunk where their growth begins anew each year.

88. In fact it was his word, not hers, but she had let it pass it at the time.

89. That is, into paradise, into the next world.

90. Echo of *Robinson Crusoe* (1719). Whenever he says "desert island" he is also referring back to the one he described in letter IV, III, 339.

91. There is really no such "secret." Bernardin de Saint-Pierre later related that when he asked Rousseau about it, the latter replied: "I thought there was one, I was mistaken" (Bernardin de Saint-Pierre, *La vie et les ouvrages de J. J. Rousseau* [Paris: Société des Textes Français Modernes, 1907], 99).

92. The line (*cordeau*) is used to align anything architectural; today's English equivalent would be a chalk line.

93. Like Rousseau, the Wolmars reject the classical, Le Nôtre model of garden, with its geometrical layout (see its satire later in this passage), in favor of the "English" garden where things appear to be randomly distributed, or in any case planted in a nonlinear and asymmetrical manner.

94. The footnote apparently refers to the occasionally quite complex "labyrinths" then much in vogue in French garden design.

95. As Rousseau writes in the opening lines of *Emile*, man "mutilates his dog, his horse, his slave. He turns everything upside down, he disfigures everything: he loves deformity, monsters" (Book I, Pléiade, IV, 245, Bloom, 37).

96. Named *patte d'oie* (goose-foot) for its form: a radial intersection where three (or more) garden paths come together.

97. All these are kinds of Chinese figures.

98. The magots mentioned in the note are another kind of grotesque Chinese figure, in porcelain.

99. See also Rousseau's sarcasms about criticisms of Alcinous's garden in the *Odyssey*, in a footnote to Book V of *Emile* (Pléiade, IV, 784; Bloom, 420).

100. The mite is a commonplace symbol of tininess, in particular thanks to Pascal's prescription for imagining the infinitely small in contrast to the infinitely great: cf. *Pensées*, trans. W. F. Trotter (Chicago: Encyclopedia Britannica, 1951), 181–182.

101. The exact meaning of this instance of "tulipomania" is not entirely clear. The parasol was presumably intended to protect the flower from the sun (the *Encyclopédie* article on tulips [XVI, 741] says that if their petals are thin the flowers burn before they can blossom) and the baton as a stake to hold the parasol; such a use of glass supported by sticks is to be found (applied to carnations) in Peter Aram's *A Practical Treatise of Flowers*, c. 1725 (edited by Frank Felsenstein in *Proceedings of the Leeds Philosophical and Literary Society* XX, pt. 1, 1985, p. 40). It seems at any rate that St. Preux was to identify a tulip worthy of such attention, and chose ineptly in the eyes of connoisseurs.

102. The footnote is a hint that Wolmar is insensitive to manifestations of the Divine.

103. *Étoiles* (cf. the Place de l'Étoile in Paris): multispoked intersection, the same idea as the *patte-d'oie* (Pléiade, 480).

104. The anecdote mentioned in the footnote probably comes from Béat de Muralt, who has already been quoted several times by St. Preux in part II: "I am informed, King Charles II intended to have added more ornaments to it [St. James Park], and that he had sent for a skillful person from Paris for that purpose, the same that designed the scheme for adorning the Tuileries. After he had taken a narrow view of the place, he found that its native beauty, country air, and deserts, had something greater in them, than any thing he could contrive, and persuaded the king to let it alone" (*Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations* [London: Edlin and Prévost, 1726], 77).

105. This vague name covered everything north of a line from Persia to China.

106. Sir Richard Temple, viscount Cobham (1669?–1749), reconstructed the house and laid out the celebrated gardens at Stowe.

107. At the time Rousseau writes, just such gardens were becoming the model in France, some of them literally including "follies" ("Greek" temples and "ruins"); these include the park at Ermenonville, where Rousseau lived briefly, died, and was buried in 1778.

108. That is, the bowers of part I, specifically the one in which Julie and he first kissed.

109. The temperament is a specific physiological and medical configuration, but here she means just "constitution."

110. Thus Elysium has even for Julie a clear connotation of death, at least in part because she had named it during her mourning for her mother.

111. It is evident from many passages in the *Confessions* that daydreaming was an intense activity to which Rousseau himself happily devoted countless hours; it is in ways the principal subject of the *Reveries of the Solitary Walker*.

112. Metastasio, *Giuseppe riconosciuto*, part one.

113. In fact this secret of his birth will never be clarified for the reader.

114. That is, vanity (*amour-propre*) may have one good side to the degree that, in Wolmar's case, it makes accurate observation possible. In a passage like this the term *amour-propre* seems very close to one Rousseau usually distinguished it from, *amour de soi* (which does not occur in *Julie*); cf. *Rousseau Judge of Jean Jacques*: when the passions are "deflected from their object by obstacles, they are focused on removing the obstacle rather than reaching the object; then they change nature and become irascible and hateful. And that is how the love of self [*amour de soi*], which is a good and absolute feeling, becomes amour-propre, which is to say a relative feeling by which one makes comparisons; the latter feeling demands preferences, whose enjoyment is purely negative, and it no longer seeks satisfaction in our own benefit but solely in the harm of another" (*Collected Writings*, I, 9). See also "amour-propre" in Glossary.

115. *Amour-propre* seems to be used here in a sense closer to the definition of *amour de soi* in *Emile*: "The source of our passions, the origin and the principle of all the others, the only one born with man and which never leaves him so long as he lives is self-love [*l'amour de soi*]; a primitive, innate passion, which is anterior to every other and of which all others are in a sense only modifications. . . . The love of oneself [*l'amour de soi-même*] is always good and always in conformity with order. . . . But *amour-propre*, which makes comparisons, is never content and never

could be, because this sentiment, preferring ourselves to others, also demands others to prefer us to themselves, which is impossible. This is how the gentle and affectionate passions are born of self-love [*amour de soi*], and how the hateful and irascible passions are born of *amour-propre*" (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 491–493; Bloom, 212–214).

116. Letter II, XVII: with this aside, Wolmar hints at knowledge of St. Preux's letters.

117. This succinct account suggests that though of the highest birth (he lived at court), Wolmar has been forced by flight into, and possibly then adopted by choice, subservient and even menial paths of life.

118. See letter II, III: it is the haven Edward had offered to them.

119. This could well refer to certain of St. Preux's travel narratives.

120. Despite its biblical overtones, this exclamation ("Tout le mal vient de toi, ô Israël") is probably a slight misquote from memory of a line from Louis Racine's *La Grâce* (1720): "Unhappy Israel, thy doom is thine own doing" ("Malheureux Israël, ta perte vient de toi"). The same essential idea, without the reference to Israel, recurs in *Emile*: "No evil exists other than that which you do or suffer, and both come to you from yourself" (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 588; Bloom, 282).

121. On devoutness (*dévotion*), see glossary.

122. Cf. introduction. This comparison to Heloise—the only one in the whole book—is slightly strained, insofar as Heloise was actually married to Abelard and not merely his mistress. They were, however, definitively separated, after which she became an abbess.

123. The differences prescribed by nature between the sexes are laid out in the early pages of Book V of *Emile*.

124. Emile's tutor imparts to Emile's wife the wisdom of sexual restraint so as to maintain her husband's respect in Book V of *Emile* (Pléiade, IV, 866; Bloom, 478–479).

125. She alludes to St. Preux's forceful rejection of adultery in letter III, XVI.

126. These figures express the novel's structure as one dominated by two symmetrically opposed moral tendencies: the twelve years of tears were those of unhappy love ending with Julie's marriage late in part III; the six years of glory are those of the faithful wife.

127. These cries are quotations from letter I, VII.

128. Claire teases Julie on Wolmar's exalted birth. *Hetman* or *attaman* is a Polish word for a captain or commander; *knyas* (Rousseau writes it *knès*) is a Russian prince; *boyar* (from Russian) is a privileged order of aristocracy.

129. A noble daughter (cf. letter II, XXI, 219, and note 129); otherwise, she would not have had too lofty a station to marry a commoner like St. Preux.

130. Letter IV, IX, 359–360.

131. The note mockingly adapts here an idea stemming from Heraclitus, several times expressed by Diderot: cf. the passage from *Jacques le fataliste* quoted in note 51 to letter III, XVIII, 293.

132. He seems to mean Claire's advice to Julie that she cease opposing her husband's departure.

133. According to Alexis François this is another name for a sea swallow, *sterna hirondo* ("Les provincialismes de J. J. Rousseau," *Annales J.-J. Rousseau* 3 (1907), 37.

134. According to Alexis François (see previous note), the gros-siflet and crenet are plovers (*courlis*, *corlieux*), the tiou-tiou and sifflasson are kinds of sandpiper (*chevalier aboyeur*, *gambette*).

135. The verb is in italics in the original. It means he holds an oar that serves more or less as a rudder, and becomes something of a coxswain.

136. The lake is in fact just about ten kilometers across at that point, which is about 1.8 marine leagues or 2.25 land leagues.

137. St. Preux is talking about the upper (eastern) end of the lake where the Rhone enters the lake, not its exit at Geneva.

138. In fortification a *redan* is a V-shaped inset (thus its use recalls perhaps that St. Preux was an engineer: see letter III, xxv, 325); by analogy, *redans* means here the succeeding layers of mountains receding into the valley.

139. A publican was a Roman tax farmer and for this reason (publicans are mentioned numerous times in the Gospels) the term also has biblical overtones which are always pejorative. Cf. the *Confessions*: "I left this house as indignant as I was touched and deploring the lot of these beautiful regions upon which nature has lavished its gifts only to make them the prey of barbarous publicans" (*Collected Writings*, V, 138).

140. A region on the southern edge of Lake Leman, belonging to Savoie (which was not annexed to France until 1760).

141. St. Preux might also have mentioned the fact that the Swiss (northern) side of the lake basks in the southern sun, which is advantageous to agriculture and especially to the vineyards that are plentiful there (cf. letter IV, x, 364). Rural economy was a subject of much discussion in the mid-eighteenth century, and Rousseau had contributed an article on it to the *Encyclopédie* ("Économie politique").

142. Northeast wind, mentioned in letter I, xxvi (the term is still used today).

143. The eighth engraving takes its title, "Monuments of bygone love," from this sentence. *Monument* designates, in high style, any enduring evidence of a person or event.

144. An Alpine term for high mountain regions from which glaciers descend.

145. The basic tool of copper engraving, the burin is a sharp tool used to sculpt the fine image in a copper plate after the design has been etched in first by acid.

146. The moment referred to is Julie's near death by smallpox; cf. letter III, xiv, 274.

147. Metastasio, *Demifoonte*, III, 9.

148. A medical metaphor underlies this whole description: a crisis is the highest point in a fever; either death will come quickly, or once the crisis has been weathered and the fever itself has broken, it promises a return to health.

149. He alludes to events contained in the appended text, "The Loves of Milord Edward Bomston."

Editors' Notes to Part V

1. In this letter, written from London, Edward makes no allusion to the important episode of the lake which is the subject of the last letter in part IV.

2. The inhabitants of the Valais: cf. letter I, XXIII, 65–67.

3. England, where St. Preux spent two years before his voyage in part III.

4. Law expresses the people's will (*la volonté d'un peuple*) a term very close to the *volonté générale* so central to the *Social Contract*. The model in question is England (see previous note).

5. The Firmin Abauzit (1679–1767) referred to in the note was a French scientist living in Geneva, with whom Rousseau maintained epistolary relations; he had published *Mémoires concernant la théologie et la morale* ("Memoirs concerning theology and morality") in 1732.

6. This adage can be compared to Julie's earlier pronouncement, "either that word virtue must be but an empty name, or it must require sacrifices" (letter I, XXXIX, 97, and note 88).

7. Declaring war on England and Austria, France had invaded Flanders under the command of the Maréchal de Saxe in the summer of 1744.

8. At the end of his account of the excursion to Meillerie, he stated that he hoped it had been the crisis: cf. letter IV, XVII, 428.

9. The French word used here is *vernis*, a broad term for resin-based paints; one might rather liken it to what is now called *laque*, which was then called *vernis de la Chine*.

10. "Man of quality" (*homme de qualité*), in English as in French, meant a nobleman.

11. On one of the manuscripts of *Julie* this friend is called "Milord Cornberry," that is, Lord Hyde, who will be mentioned at the beginning of letter V, VI, 488.

12. A kind of carriage with single seats facing each other.

13. That is, the master craftsman who made it.

14. The Motru in Rousseau's note is an old version of the name Montreux, near the eastern corner of the lake. "Bourgeoisie" was in numerous Swiss cities an official status recognizing established families with full civic rights; Rousseau was born a citizen of Geneva (cf. second preface, 20); but such a status could be purchased, whence the remarks here about its high cost.

15. Any sign of well-being might cause the tax collector to descend upon a person who had not previously been levied. The end of the sentence refers to the nobility's exemption from taxation.

16. The subject here is the individual who leaves the soil, but the description is tellingly similar to that for the social emergence of man from the state of nature, as explained in the first section of the *Discourse on Inequality*.

17. There is a very similar passage about a lackey who wants to learn to draw and paint in Book II of *Emile* (Pléiade, IV, 474–475; Bloom, 198–199).

18. A pointed criticism of Diderot's argument for drama, in which he argues that tears have a real and potent effect on the viewer (*Entretiens sur Le Fils naturel*, 1757). Rousseau uses similar terminology in a passage from the *Letter to M. d'Alem-*

bert: "I hear it said that tragedy leads to pity through terror; so be it, but what kind of pity is it? A vain and fleeting emotion, which lasts no longer than the illusion that produced it; a remnant of natural sentiment, soon smothered by the passions; a sterile pity, which indulges in a few tears, and has never produced the slightest act of humanity" (Pléiade, V, 23).

19. A farthing (*liard*), in the footnote, is a quarter of a sou. Rousseau's refutation is coyly but anonymously directed at Voltaire, who had written of Paris beggars: "They are a vermin that attach themselves to wealth; the idle flock to Paris from the far reaches of the kingdom to take advantage of opulence and goodness" ("Observations sur MM. Jean Lass, Melon et Dutot," 1738). This is the most carefully reworked of all the notes to the novel.

20. A crutz is a quarter of a *batz*, which was in turn the quarter of a florin; a dinner might cost six or seven batz (cf. note 54 to letter IV, x, 365).

21. Apollo is the name of one of Lucullus's "most stately and sumptuous halls," in which he entertained in grand style Cicero and Pompey (Plutarch, "Life of Lucullus"); Galerie d'Apollon was also the name of one of the most ornate halls in the royal palace at Versailles.

22. For "Argus" (in the note), see note to letter I, xxxvi, 91.

23. The tower of Babel, in Genesis 11:1–9.

24. A key tenet of liberal political doctrine: inequalities among citizens being justified by functional necessity, anyone could accept without complaint to be born to any of its positions.

25. Money is seen here as an artificial and inauthentic form of value, inappropriate and unnecessary where genuine bonds exist between people; cf. the observations of St. Preux in part I on the enviable economy of the Valais where specie and intermediaries were of no use. At the same time, money allegorically debases and contaminates the loftier sentiments, a sentiment found as well in Prévost: "Love is stronger than plenty, stronger than treasures and riches, but it needs their help; and nothing is more heartbreaking, for a delicate lover, than to be reduced because of that, despite himself, to the coarseness of the basest souls" (*Manon Lescaut* [1731; Paris: Garnier Frères, 1965], 109).

26. A share farmer or sharecropper, who works, for a percentage, land belonging to a lord.

27. That is, with a few tankards of wine.

28. "King Antiochus's ambassadors . . . made a marvelous large discourse of the great multitude of soldiers that were in their master's army, and did number them by many diverse names. Whereunto Titus answered, and told how a friend of his having bidden him one night to supper, and having served so many dishes of meat to his board, as he was angry with him for bestowing so great cost upon him, as wondering how he could so suddenly get so much store of meat, and of so diverse kinds. My friend said to me again, that all was but pork dressed so many ways, and with so sundry sauces. And so (quoth Titus) my Lords of Achaia, esteem not king Antiochus's army the more, to hear of so many men of arms, numbered with their lances, and of such a number of footmen with their pikes: for they are all but Syrians, diversely armed, only with ill-favored little weapons" (Plutarch, *Life of Flaminius*, North trans.).

29. *Rancio*, of Spanish origin, is an aged spirit of wine, *malaga* a wine taking its name from its place of origin, as do Chassaigne (i.e. chassagne-montrachet), from Burgundy, and syracuse. Lavaux is a wine district in the Pays de Vaud, along Lake Leman.

30. The footnote alludes to an extremely popular epistolary novel of 1759, *Lettres de Milady Juliette Catesby*, by Marie Jeanne Riccoboni. Fleeing from London to avoid the unwelcome attentions of an inconstant suitor, the heroine is successively entertained on the estates of various acquaintances, whose foibles she describes in letters to her confidante. The novel is set, like so many of the period, in an England of convention.

31. This picture of uniformity can be compared to the fairly extensive description by Anna Howe of Clarissa's highly methodical daily regimen in letter 529 (first edition) of *Clarissa*.

32. This scene furnished the subject for Rousseau's ninth engraving, for which the legend "Morning in the English manner" is taken from this sentence. Rousseau may have coined the expression *à l'anglaise*, which has not been found elsewhere, but a passage in the *Confessions* makes it clear that it denotes a breakfast that the whole family takes together: Rousseau prefers "the practice of England and Switzerland—in which breakfast is a true meal which brings everyone together—to that of France in which each breakfasts alone in his room" (*Collected Writings* V, 198). (St. Preux did not so qualify his breakfast with just the two Wolmars in letter IV, XI, 401). The silence that is also so much a part of this scene is also a characteristic attributed to the English: Muralt says that for them "Conversation should be a Commerce of Sentiments, and not of Words; and since, for that Reason, there may not be always matter enough for discourse, they keep silence for a long time" (*Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations* [London: Edlin and Prévost, 1726], 58).

33. A reference to letter II, 11, at which time Bomston was watching over the unsteady St. Preux.

34. The gods, according to Epicurus (ca. 300 B.C.E.), never intervened in the universe that is exclusively material.

35. The word *chambre* here appears to refer not to a bedroom but to another room reserved for Julie's use.

36. Great emotion was displayed when the king was thought to be in danger of dying, as he was leading his army against the Austrians at Metz, in August of 1744. Roman mourning at the death of Germanicus is described by Tacitus (*Annals*, II, 72–73).

37. Cavalier Marino or Marini, *Adone*, III, 151.

38. The difference illustrated here between practical knowledge and concept is fundamental in *Emile*, throughout the early books of which Rousseau insists it is always a mistake to teach a child things through reason rather than through example; for example: "Let him not know what obedience is when he acts nor what dominion is when one acts for him" (Book II, Pléiade, IV, 311; Bloom, 85).

39. In *Emile* Rousseau refers frequently to the "wise Locke" and particularly to his *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693).

40. Rousseau insists in *Emile* that reason is the end product of education, a

summation of all the child's capacities, and not its medium: "Of all the faculties of man, reason, which is, so to speak, only a composite of all the others, is the one that develops with the most difficulty and latest. And it is this one which they want to use in order to develop the first faculties! The masterpiece of a good education is to make a reasonable man, and they claim they raise a child by reason! This is to begin with the end, to want to make the product the instrument" (Book II, Pléiade, IV, 317; Bloom, 89).

41. See *Emile*: "Childhood has its ways of seeing, thinking and feeling which are proper to it. Nothing is less sensible than to want to substitute ours for theirs, and I would like as little to insist that a ten-year-old be five feet tall as that he possess judgment" (Book II, Pléiade, IV, 319; Bloom, 90).

42. This theme surfaces more than once in *Emile*: "I take away the instruments of their greatest misery, that is, books. Reading is the plague of childhood" (Book II, Pléiade, IV, 357; Bloom, 116); "I hate books; they only teach one to talk about what one does not know" (Book III, Pléiade, IV, 454; Bloom, 184).

43. In letter IV, 11, 439–440, however, Julie had argued against following the talents of each child, at least with respect to the lower classes.

44. The first sentence of Book I of *Emile* echoes this one: "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things" (Pléiade, IV, 245; Bloom, 37).

45. The "wrong shapes" are again part of the objection put forward at the beginning of *Emile*: man "mutilates his dog, his horse, his slave. He turns everything upside down; he disfigures everything" (Book I, Pléiade, IV, 245; Bloom, 37).

46. The allusion is to anamorphic images, which are not monstrous in essence but become so by extreme distortion; the most famous is the death's head in Holbein's *The Ambassadors*, which had for a long time been in Paris.

47. This expression is noticeably close to Voltaire's phrase, itself based on Leibniz, "le meilleur des mondes possibles" (best of all possible worlds), which is mocked in *Candide* (1759). Rousseau had already protested to Voltaire (letter of 18 August 1756) over the pessimism expressed in his *Poem on the Disaster of Lisbon* (1756).

48. The next three paragraphs are a late addition to the text, by way of refuting ideas that appeared in Helvétius's *De l'esprit*, which was published in 1759. It is St. Preux who gives voice here (before the fact, since we are in 1744) to materialist thought like that of Helvétius.

49. These propositions are reminiscent of a project (mentioned in Book IV of the *Confessions*) for a book Rousseau never wrote, and which he would have entitled "Sensitive Morality, or the Wise Man's Materialism" (*La morale sensitive, ou le matérialisme du sage*; *Collected Writings*, V, 343–344); some of its principles inform the conception of *Emile*.

50. "Organization" was the name of a physiological configuration of the organs that can somehow account for the variations among similarly constituted beings.

51. "Aspect" is the astrological term for the relative position of stars; they can be conjunction, sextile, quartile, trine, opposition. "Theme" is another astrological term: the disposition of the heavenly bodies relative to a particular person's time and place of birth.

52. This "chemistry" is an interesting mid-point between alchemy and modern

chemistry: it revives the idea of chemical experimentation linked to the desire to produce gold out of other elements, but restricts it with a theory of the constancy of elemental identity.

53. The idea of careful observation of the child, which comes from Montaigne, is a basic premise of *Emile*. To it, Rousseau has added an equally important corollary, that of avoiding harmful intervention and therefore doing nothing, in preference to doing the wrong thing.

54. This passage can be compared with St. Preux's description of the Valais in letter I, XXIII. This praise of the simplicity of country life was a theme of mid-century poetry in both France and England, where it was perhaps epitomized in Thomas Gray's evocation of "The short and simple annals of the poor" (*Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, 1750).

55. As the end of the paragraph shows, here the term "civil state" (*l'état civil*) refers essentially to the city.

56. Inexorable necessity governs early education in *Emile*, even in the child's relationship to his tutor: "Do not even allow him to imagine that you might pretend to have any authority over him. Let him know that he is weak and you are strong, that by his condition and yours he is necessarily at your mercy" (Book II, Pléiade, IV, 320; Bloom, 91).

57. "Gaudeant bene nati" ("Happy the well-born") was a Latin adage; Julie applies it, evidently, to children with a good temperament rather than to their social condition.

58. This principle is repeated in Book I of *Emile*, where Rousseau stresses the importance of enjoying life rather than just living long: "It is less a question of keeping him from dying than of making him live. To live is not to breathe; it is to act; it is to make use of our organs, our senses, our faculties, of all the parts of ourselves which give us the sentiment of our existence" (Pléiade, IV, 253; Bloom, 42).

59. This principle applies from infancy in *Emile*, notably in his rejection of the practice of swaddling: "The newborn needs to stretch and move its limbs in order to arouse them from the torpor in which, drawn up in a little ball, they have for so long remained" (Book I, Pléiade, IV, 254; Bloom, 43).

60. These pointed comments prepare the reader in an indirect way for the publication of *Emile* one year after *Julie*.

61. This is an adaptation of Chremes's famous line in act I of Terence's *Heauton Timoroumenos* ("The Self-Tormentor"): "Homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto"; in *Emile*, Rousseau says this principle is appropriate only at the point the child reaches sexual maturity: "It is now that man is truly born to life and now that nothing human is foreign to him" (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 490; Bloom, 212).

62. According to Plutarch, Pythagoras obligated the young to observe a five-year silence (*Curiosity*, chap. IX).

63. Punchinello (Policinella) is a stock character of the *commedia dell'arte*, whose lines are set up by a foil or decoy.

64. The reference in the note is to Sir John Chardin's *Voyages de M. le chevalier Chardin en Perse et aux Indes orientales*, 1686, which Rousseau cites in a Paris edition of 1723.

65. The voice or language, which "distinguishes man among animals" (beginning of the *Essay on the Origin of Languages*, Pléiade, V, 375).

66. In *Emile*, it is clear that the emergence of reason takes place only in early adolescent years: there is nothing that can properly be called reason in a small child.

67. These principles are elaborated in the first two books of *Emile*: it is critical not to begin any teaching until the motivation for it already has made itself known, and the method should be as thoroughly practical as possible.

68. Rousseau develops in Book II of *Emile* his arguments against teaching foreign languages to young children: see Pléiade, IV, 346–347; Bloom, 108–109.

69. That is, he must count the syllables on his fingers.

70. Rousseau develops in Book II of *Emile* his objections to all forms of memorization, as well as the introduction of abstract concepts such as those of geometry.

71. These two paragraphs reappear almost word for word in Book II of *Emile* (Pléiade, IV, 351; Bloom, 112).

72. In Book II of *Emile* Rousseau delivers a detailed critique of the lessons a child might draw from a fable of La Fontaine's (Pléiade, IV, 353–357; Bloom, 113–116).

73. A similar method for creating a child's own motivation to learn to read is described in Book II of *Emile*: there he needs to decipher written invitations in time not to miss the event to which he has been invited (Pléiade, IV, 358).

74. "Emile will never learn anything by heart, not even fables" (*Emile*, Book II, Pléiade, IV, 351; Bloom, 112).

75. One of the paradoxes of the educational system of *Emile* is precisely that religion should not be taught the child but reserved for the adolescent when his reason is mature: the child deforms the image of God and learns the catechism only as a parrot would (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 554; Bloom, 257).

76. Wolmar's intervention and St. Preux's reply were censured from the Paris edition for reasons that Malesherbes (director of the *librairie* or book police), inviting Rousseau to modify them, explained to him in this way:

> Julie and St. Preux being the novel's heroes, their way of thinking can make an impression and will always be taken for that of the author. Thus they can be made out as heretics, because that is the religion of their country; but it seemed that in this passage the author is going further and lending St. Preux doubts about everything that is beyond comprehension.
>
> Might you be a Christian, *by chance*? also seemed to be an ironic and out of place phrase, even in the mouth of Wolmar. (RAL 1298, 16 Feb. 1761)

Rousseau wrote in reply:

> St. Preux's reply to Monsieur de Wolmar is the most moderate and reasonable thing that anyone could say about the Christian religion and its mysteries. The catholics who insist on playing double or nothing are making a big mistake; they will surely not come out better with such a deal: now why should we be expected to make just the same mistake? The reformed [i.e. protestants] are beginning to perceive the necessity of sacrificing a few branches to save the tree; and it is in this spirit that theological matters are treated in *Julie*. Besides, if St. Preux is not a Calvinist, he will perhaps be made out to be a Socinian, which is still to be a heretic. What more can be asked of him? Would the Sor-

bonne like to make us intolerant despite ourselves, or prescribe to us in what manner it would be pleased to see us go to hell? What right, what oversight does the Catholic Church pretend to exert over anyone who does not recognize its authority? It is wasting its time: intolerance, even theological, is contrary to our principles, and the only way it has ever managed to insinuate itself among us is by fraud. Now, I maintain that all the faithful are entitled to protest against such fraud. Every formal profession of faith goes against the spirit of the Reformation; and I recognize no doctrine as heterodox unless it fails to establish good morality, or leads to bad. It remains to be seen whether this applies to that of Julie or St. Preux. Julie and St. Preux being the novel's heroes, says Monsieur de Malesherbes, their way of thinking may make an impression, and will always be taken for the author's. Author or no, if this way of thinking is taken for mine, and may make an impression, so much the better: the more reason for me not to change anything. Every other objection is incompetent coming from Catholics, and does not affect me coming from anyone.

With respect to the word *by chance*, I do not know what is out of place about it in the mouth of Wolmar: but I well know that it would be by great chance, were there to be a single Christian on earth. However, if that word is all I have to sacrifice, it is all right with me. (RAL 1350, ca. 10 March 1761)

77. A girl's education proceeds from principles quite separate from the boy's and is the subject of separate treatment in Book V of *Emile*.

78. The Maréchal de Saxe, who had limited forces available for the war in Flanders after Louis XV shifted most of his forces toward the Rhine in August of 1744.

79. 27 June 1743.

80. In the War of Spanish Succession, 13 August 1704: defeat of the French and Bavarians by the English and Austrians under Marlborough and Prince Eugene.

81. That is, for the winter.

82. Rousseau's note can be compared with this passage in *The Social Contract*: "If someone who has publicly acknowledged these same dogmas behaves as though he does not believe them, he should be punished with death; he has committed the greatest of crimes: he lied before the laws" (*Collected Writings*, IV, 223).

83. This phrase, "s'éclaircir de bonne foi," likely alludes to a clandestine manuscript of the early eighteenth century entitled *Examen de la religion dont on cherche l'éclaircissement de bonne foi* ("An Examination of religion by someone attempting to enlighten himself in good faith").

84. The context makes "Christian" refer exclusively to Protestants here.

85. The essential difference is that the sceptic (agnostic) allows the possibility that God exists. "This whole piece," wrote the Paris censor, "is an invective against the Catholic Religion which cannot possibly be tolerated in France" (RAL 1298).

86. Saint Theresa of Avila (1515–1582), author of several books of religious mysticism and founder of the order of St. Joseph of Avila. These words "as with Saint Theresa" were stricken by the French censor.

87. The sentiments expressed in the note, which can be traced to Pascal and Malebranche, are highly reminiscent of some passages in Prévost, notably those concerning Cecile in *Le philosophe anglais* (1732–1739): "a heart worthy of God him-

self by the astonishing ardor of its sentiments. . . . She inclined toward the happiness of loving without limits and without measure" (*Oeuvres de Prévost* [Grenoble, 1977–1986], II, 614): the book is one Rousseau had read passionately (*Confessions*, Book V, *Collected Writings*, V, 184.

88. The idea that "the heavens declare the glory of God" goes back to Psalms 19:1, but the "wonder of nature" as manifestation of God's existence and power was also a newly popularized theme in the early eighteenth century, adducing new discoveries in natural history; its best-known manifestation in France was the series of books entitled *Le spectacle de la nature* by the Abbé Pluche, which was republished well into the nineteenth century.

89. An echo of one of the best-known sentences in Pascal's *Pensées*: "The eternal silence of these infinite spaces terrifies me" (Brunschvicg no. 206).

90. Julie hesitates here between two unpleasant prospects, the first the possibility of eternal punishment of the unbeliever, the second that he may by ceasing to exist merely be deprived of the eternal life believers will enjoy.

91. This dense sentence seems essentially to mean that in Catholic countries, where true (that is, Protestant) belief cannot be practiced, atheism is a sort of natural response, but that in Protestant countries it must for the same reason be intolerable and therefore go underground. It was excised by the Paris censor.

92. Atheism.

93. Pyrrhonism is named for Pyrrho, a Greek philosopher of the fourth and third centuries B.C.E., but here the word is just a general term for scepticism, or more specifically in this context, agnosticism.

94. The reference here is ambiguous: at Meillerie (letter IV, XVII, 425–427) the weakness seemed equally shared, but St. Preux said it was Julie who had delivered the toughest battle. The next paragraph suggests it is indeed she who is intended.

95. Thus they obey his earlier injunction to act as if he were present when absent, and absent when present (letter IV, VI, 349).

96. The verb for bringing in (*ramener*) implies "into the fold," a pastoral and biblical metaphor: "bringing in" the sheep suggests that they have merely strayed, not been lost forever from the fold.

97. In effect this describes a nontheological version of "efficacious grace" (*grâce efficace*) by which God supplies the ability to believe.

98. "They call *freethinkers* [*esprits forts*] those who through foolish presumption, wish to place themselves above common opinions and maxim" (*Dictionnaire de l'Académie*, 1762).

99. This note of Rousseau's was stricken by the French censor, with this explanation: "We have stricken the note, not to approve persecutors, but because it is an excessive and false proposition to assert that they are all in bad faith. Moreover this note is useless to the work, is not by any means new, and consequently not at all instructive, and there are some who are displeased by it" (RAL 1298). Rousseau replied: "I certainly expect there are some who are displeased by the note. If there were none, it would not be worth leaving it in. For my part, I think that every persecutor is a knave, or an idiot. If the note is nothing new, so what: it is useful" (RAL 1350).

100. A Cartesian term derived from the scholastic *primum mobile*: in both cases

it referred to God, but only in his impersonal capacity as physical first cause of all things.

101. For the most part, the characters in the novel steer clear of theological terminology while using neighboring concepts; here, however, Wolmar uses the theological term "efficacy" (*efficace*), which refers to divine grace (cf. note 97 to letter V, v, 486), but transforms what in religious language would be prayers into "wishes" instead.

102. Henry Hyde, viscount Cornbury (1710–1753), was a member of Parliament and then of the House of Lords as Baron Hyde. He often visited Paris, where Rousseau apparently met him (cf. *Emile*, Book II, Pléiade, IV, 424; Bloom, 162), and died there.

103. In other words, a passport to allow him entry into France; national passports were not yet in usage, and the letter of authorization called a passport was more like what we could today call a visa.

104. Lutry is just east of Lausanne, on Lake Leman.

105. This sudden, generalized collapse under intense emotion is typical also of the novels of Prévost: cf. the reunion of Fanny and Cecile and that of Cleveland and Fanny (*Oeuvres de Prévost* [Grenoble, 1977–1986], II, 450 and 512).

106. The "ciphers" are initials or other monograms used in a seal or for decorative purposes.

107. One of several indications that Claire's attitude toward him is somehow modified, not quite so playful.

108. The three are Claire, her valet Hanz, and her chambermaid.

109. *Garde-noble*: a legal term meaning that she has custody over and temporary use of what fortune her daughter has inherited directly from her deceased father.

110. It is significant that Henriette, who has already been subtly assimilated to Julie, is blonde like her rather than a brunette like her mother: cf. note 13 to appendix II, 621.

111. Rousseau will take up the subject of hunting, mentioned in the note, in Book IV of *Emile* (Pléiade, IV, 644–645 and 689; Bloom, 320–321 and 353).

112. All these factors relate to the assumption that man's original vocation was to till the earth. The "notion" is that of classical georgics: the referents, in other words, are literary and not historical.

113. Farmer (*fermier*) here refers probably to someone who has let land and has it farmed by sharecroppers. The master, on the other hand, would be the landowner.

114. St. Preux restates here the themes of the contrast between agriculture in the Vaud and in subject states that he had expressed to Julie in letter IV, XVII, 422–423.

115. Allusion to the sempiternal myth of a precultural golden age; but as the following biblical examples show, it is not a purely classical image and also contains distant echoes of the earthly paradise in the Book of Genesis.

116. Jacob's seven years' labor for Rachel's hand, that "seemed unto him but a few days, for the love he had to her," became fourteen when her sister Leah was substituted for her in the first marriage (Genesis 29:15–30).

117. The first is Ruth, Naomi's daughter-in-law; the second Boaz, at whose feet she lay (Ruth 3:14).

118. A Greek surname of Bacchus, "the deliverer" because he undoes mortal worries (he is called *pater Lyaeus* in the *Aeneid*, IV, 58).

119. From the German *Lägerfass*.

120. *L'utile et l'agréable* was a cherished formula of neoclassical aesthetics; by tying it to a description of rural economy, he makes of it a "natural" esthetic rather than an artificial one.

121. The "second test" is anticipated by Wolmar after the first, in letter IV, VII, 353.

122. A subtle reminder that d'Étange had a son, whom he lost; there are several allusions to Julie's brother in part I: see, for example, letters I, IV, 32, and I, VII, 38.

123. Must (*moût*) is the pressed juice of the vine before fermentation; "working" is the first stage in wine production, maceration of the crushed grapes in their juice, beginning the fermentation process.

124. Despite the allusion to magic, such recipes for doctoring wines existed in the countryside and had been published; Rousseau may have learned of them from Mme de Warens and Claude Anet, who were fascinated with herbs and home chemistry (*Confessions*, Book V, *Collected Writings*, V, 148–149); but this passage perhaps gives an exaggerated notion of their success.

125. This strange lack of numerical agreement between "father" and "mothers" is explained by the fact that the three children have only one father between them, Henriette having lost hers.

126. When his legions revolted, Germanicus sent his wife and son to safety; but when the soldiers saw them leaving, they were moved and asked her to stay, after which Germanicus was able to persuade them to remain faithful (Tacitus, *Annals*, I, 40–41). St. Preux may be conflating this story with that of Aggripina showing her son Nero to the soldiers so as to have him declared emperor at the same time that Claudius's death is announced.

127. During the saturnalia, the feast in honor of Saturn, slaves were allowed license that would have been punished at other times.

128. The notion of mediocrity stressed in the note, in the sense of the mean or middle term, is a principle of education in Book I of *Emile*, because the person situated in the middle of any range of values possesses more versatility and thus ultimately more survivability.

129. Scutching entails beating the woody stalk to separate out the usable fibre. This idyllic passage echoes an experience Rousseau relates in the *Confessions*: "Dinners on the grass at Montagnole, suppers under the bower, the harvests of the fruits, the grape harvests, the evenings of scutching hemp with our servants, all this made up so many festivals for us from which Mamma [Mme de Warens] took the same pleasure as I did" (Book VI, *Collected Writings*, V, 204).

130. "Romance" here is a plaintive song.

131. "All those whose ear is trained to Harmony, prefer the Accord of Consonances to the sameness of *Unison*; but all those who, unaccustomed to Harmony, have, if I may put it thus, no prejudice in the ear, come to the opposite conclusion; *Unison* alone pleases them, or, at the very most Octaves; any other Interval sounds discordant to them: whence it would follow, it seems to me, that the most natural

Harmony, and consequently the best, is *Unison*" (*Dictionary of Music*, q.v. "Unisson," Pléiade, V, 1141).

132. The thought expressed is similar to that which opens Book I of *Emile*: "Everything is good as it leaves the hands of the Author of things; everything degenerates in the hands of man" (Pléiade, IV, 245; Bloom, 37). The same preference for melody over harmony is expressed in chapter XIV on harmony in the *Essay on the Origin of Languages* and in the article "Harmonie" of the *Dictionary of Music*.

133. *L'homme au beurre* (in the note): this is a singularly personal allusion: in 1755, a crock of butter destined for Thérèse Levasseur's mother came into the hands of the Comte de Lastic, who consumed it himself and mocked her demands for restitution (*Correspondance*, RAL 349–350, 20 December 1755). Few would have been able to decode it at the time *Julie* appeared. Entreated to suppress it, Rousseau did not at first do so, but did in the editions of 1763 and 1764.

134. This recapitulation of thoughts at the close of the day coincides with the unusual structure of this letter, which is at the same time a program for life, a treatise on a particular aspect of the economic system at Clarens, and an extended description of the activities of a single day. Compare the passage on the uniformity of Julie's life, letter V, 11, 453.

135. There has been a considerable interval since the preceding letter. Edward has spent the winter at Clarens, during which time there was no need for letters between the protagonists. Subsequently, he and St. Preux have left for Italy, occasioning this letter.

136. This will be explained in the next letter.

137. We now know the function, already hinted at several times, that Wolmar has in mind for St. Preux. Preceptor is also the role in which the narrator of *Emile* places himself.

138. A quasi-announcement of the imminent publication of *Emile*, Rousseau's treatise on education, which was to appear in the year following *Julie*.

139. He refers to his first departure, and his subsequent challenge to Edward, in letter II, x.

140. At the eastern point of Lake Leman.

141. Rousseau may have passed through Bex, twenty kilometers inland from Villeneuve, on his return from Italy in 1744, and we know he spent a night there in 1754, so he might very likely have seen its most notable feature, its salt spring from which the salt was extracted by evaporation in a *saline* or salt pond.

142. Where the salt is collected through evaporation of the water from the salt spring.

143. On his trip to the Valais: see letter I, XVIII, 56.

144. Such an instantaneous and involuntary recall of the sensations of an earlier moment in the same location is today particularly associated with Proust, but is already clearly set forth here. Unlike Marcel, however, St. Preux does not go on to delectate in the sensation and consciously explore its mechanisms.

145. This crisis is similar to the one of Meillerie in part I, as suggested by the similarity of expression when it was revisited in part IV: "Those happy times are no more" (letter IV, XVII, 427).

146. This hallucinatory, elusive presence is highly reminiscent, even for the

terms in which Rousseau evokes it, of Athalie's *songe* or vision in Racine's *Athalie* (II, 5).

147. Subject of the tenth engraving, "Whither wilst thou flee? The Phantom is in thine heart."

148. These "soliloquies," which Claire omits as she reads the letter aloud, would doubtless be, in particular, St. Preux's nostalgic exclamations in the previous letter (V, IX, 503).

149. In case he has overheard any of the conversation itself, she attempts in this way to suggest that what they talked about was a mere ruse on her part.

150. That is, an abstract thinker (*homme à systèmes*, used sarcastically here) to whom systematic thought is more important than observation of detail; cf. note 35 on *esprit de systèmes* in letter IV, VII, 352.

151. Because Marsyas dreamed of slitting Dionysius's throat, Dionysius had him put to death, saying he would not have dreamed it at night if he had not thought about it by day; Plutarch cites this act as an example of the tyrant's cruelty ("Life of Dionysius"). The "type" in question seems to be, in consequence, a dream that is a direct reflection of daytime preoccupations.

152. This "generosity" refers back with a note of sarcasm to the last line of St. Preux's letter V, VIII, 501.

153. The woman whom Edward Bomston loved; this story is related in a supplement, "The Loves of Milord Edward Bomston" (see next note).

154. Actually, the episode mentioned in the note appeared only later as a supplement to *Julie*, and is included as appendix I in this volume.

155. See letter I, VII, 36–37.

156. Rousseau's note "corrects" Claire's normal spelling for snare, *lacs* pronounced [lɑ], to *las*, because (as Claire observes in letter VI, V, 542) the Genevans would pronounce it *lac* [lak] like the word "lake."

157. Here as in several points of this letter Julie recalls that of Claire shortly before her marriage (letter II, V).

158. Claire had asserted that she loved only Julie perfectly, and asked this question of her, in letter II, V, 169.

159. The original reads: "Un freddo *amico* è mal sicuro *amante*" (Metastasio, *Eroe cinese*, III, 3).

160. The reverse logic of Julie's affirmation seems to be that since Claire is not, as she pretends, a *fredda amante* (Julie has just said that she believes herself "at once an ardent friend and a cold lover"), she is therefore a *sicura amica* and Julie therefore can depend on her—a reason Julie is not asking for.

161. Julie had evoked from the very beginning the "first step . . . which I ought not to have taken" (letter I, IV, 32).

162. This comparison furnished the legend for the eleventh engraving, which concerns a test of Claire's and St. Preux's feelings for each other.

163. In the *Confessions*, Rousseau says that having written this line spontaneously and realizing later that it might be applied to Madame de Pompadour, he altered it only to the extent of substituting "prince" for the previous "king." The sentence was cut from the Paris edition, and Malesherbes, director of the book trade, had a substitute page printed and tipped into the copy sent to the Marquise

de Pompadour; but she learned about it anyway, and this incident may, in Rousseau's version of things, have contributed to the beginning of his persecutions (Book X, *Collected Writings*, V, 429).

164. Cf. letter II, V, 168: "who ever saw genuine friendship end up in love?"

165. Geneva, which was not part of the Swiss federation.

166. The *petit-* prefix is a familiar term of affection for "adoptive" relationships; thus, Henriette uses *petit-papa* for Wolmar, *petit-grandpapa* for d'Étange (her great-uncle), and *petite-maman* for Julie herself. "Aunt" (*mie*) is another kind of affectionate term for unrelated women much older than the child.

167. *Mitaines à jour*: a sort of lace half-glove that covered the forearm, wrist, and part of the hand but not the fingers.

Editors' Notes to Part VI

1. The Battle of Fontenoy, 11 May 1745.

2. She refers to the variety of wines at Clarens, described in letter V, 11, 452.

3. See note 79 to letter I, XXXVI, 91.

4. She is alluding to letter V, XIII.

5. Claire plays here on the common practice of writing a draft before copying out the final letter, and her spontaneity (and playfulness) is underscored by the subsistence of a sentence that would disappear from the letter entirely were it in fact rewritten.

6. Subject of engraving 11, entitled: "Claire, Claire! Children sing at night when they are afraid."

7. "I go to die, my love": attributed to Leonardo Leo (1694–1744), this line was alluded to by Julie in letter I, LII, 117.

8. Claire is thus only six months from her thirtieth birthday; St. Preux, who is about two years older, will in another six years be approaching his fortieth. The privilege of mixing the salad with the fingers, which will assure the most thorough distribution of the dressing, goes to the youngest or prettiest woman; the point is that Claire will not be able after age thirty to consider herself young.

9. Both "my friend" and "yours" are in the feminine.

10. The commitment is her vow never to give a successor to her husband; the duty is, presumably, that of remaining faithful to her first husband, for which others might fault her.

11. This convoluted clause means that although the person with the least fortune will for that reason owe all of his to his new wife, she would take more pride in the match than he would, and for this reason will not take social inequality into account.

12. Allusion to Julie's previous letter, V, XIII, 515.

13. This commitment is found in letter III, XX, 308.

14. St. Preux and d'Orbe: she alludes to Julie's argument in letter V, XIII, 519: "The honor you owe the departed is to respect his Widow enough to offer her a husband rather than a lover, and if your youth obliges you to fill his place, is it not still paying tribute to his memory to choose a man who was dear to him?"

15. The "token" (*gage*) of their love is their child Henriette.

16. Allusion to her own role as "duenna" much earlier (cf. letter I, VII, 37); here the roles appear reversed.

17. Claire alludes to the "so redolent of..." in Julie's letter V, XIII, 513.

18. The situation is not yet ripe: an allusion to La Fontaine's fable "Le Renard et les raisins" ("The Fox and the Grapes," *Fables*, III, 11), in which the fox consoles himself for not being able to reach the grapes he wants to eat by saying: "They are too green, and good for churls."

19. She appears to mean that this business of a husband for her almost made her forget what she was going to say about the wedding party and Geneva.

20. Since St. Preux had earlier promised to serve Edward, presumably following him to England for that purpose, only Edward's decision to remain at Clarens could relieve him of that obligation.

21. The editor's note refers back to his note at the end of letter V, V, 488.

22. Edward is thus a Protestant, but—if the term "Lutheran" is taken literally—not an Anglican as one might have expected.

23. The duty is that of contributing to a renewal of the population, which was thought to be threatened if all able persons did not procreate.

24. Society, in other words, does not need renewing at the top; Bomston's rigorously anti-aristocratic ethic insists that true renewal comes from the lowest and most rural parts of society. This is consistent with his argument against the nobility in part I (letter I, LXII, 138–139).

25. Obviously he is a hereditary member of the House of Lords.

26. Edward adds his voice to those working toward Wolmar's conversion, on the assumption that nature is a book that reveals God's glory; cf. note 88 to letter V, V, 484.

27. Wolmar's two tests of St. Preux are explained in letters IV, VII, 353, and V, VII, 495.

28. Legal term, meaning succession to an inheritance in someone else's place.

29. The "little State" is Geneva, which was independent.

30. The country (*pays*) or home region is "merely" a relation of association or familiarity, whereas the image of blood connection in the notion of fatherland (*patrie*) is more essential.

31. "Rome is no longer in Rome, it is wherever I am" (Corneille, *Sertorius*, III, 1; the correct preposition in the quotation is not *à* but *dans*).

32. Allusion to the fact that St. Preux is in Rome with Bomston, and that Julie thinks Claire loves him.

33. The editor means, in other words, that chalets have been built closer to the city since this letter was written.

34. The editor (fictionally) intervenes to correct Claire's grammar: for *grande orgue* (f.) she should have written *grand Orgue* (m.): there was hesitation through much of the century about the gender of the singular of *orgue*, which is always feminine in the plural.

35. Historically, Claire may be exaggerating this civic harmony in Geneva, despite her allusion to the repeated clashes between the patriciate and the other classes which were renewed in the 1730s.

36. Since Geneva must import products, it needs specie. Once more we en-

counter implicitly the theme of natural economy, in which money is unneeded; money is thus the sign and the consequence of some sort of excess or decadence.

37. The footnote is an aggressive allusion, which any reader of Rousseau's would have recognized, to Voltaire. Rousseau, born and raised in Geneva, had dedicated his second *Discourse* to the city and signed several of his works "Citoyen de Genève." Voltaire, exiled from Paris, had settled at Les Délices, just outside Geneva, in 1755; he was believed to be behind d'Alembert's article *Genève* in the fifth volume (1757) of the *Encyclopédie*, which Rousseau attacked in the *Letter to M. d'Alembert* (1758). Central to that dispute was the civilizing (or corrupting) influence that might be exerted in Geneva by the presence of a theater; moreover, in 1755 the city authorities had forbidden Genevans from participating in Voltaire's private theater. Relations between the two subsequently degenerated to the point where Rousseau sent Voltaire on 17 June 1760 a famous letter declaring: "I do not like you, Monsieur. . . . You have ruined Geneva in recompense for the asylum you have received there. You have alienated my co-citizens from me in recompense for the applause I showered on you amongst them: it is you who make it unbearable for me to stay in my own country." This note had almost certainly already been written by that time, but would not appear in print until early 1761.

38. A word play based on *fer* (fetter, but also iron) and *argent* (silver, but also money).

39. In the first of these the final *c* is not normally pronounced; in the second it is.

40. In this instance Claire herself spells it two ways to indicate first the normal pronunciation (silent final *c* of *tabac* 'tobacco') and the Genevan manner.

41. As she has said, these pronunciations favor etymologies: thus, in place of the usual word *parasol*, the Genevans say *pare-sol* (protection from the sun).

42. The word is correctly written *avant-hier* (the day before yesterday) but Claire writes it two ways to show whether or not the liaison *t* is pronounced.

43. Again etymological pronunciation (*Secré-*) is favored in Geneva, whereas in French many words beginning in *sec-* (e.g. *second*) have taken on an intervocalic *g* sound.

44. They pronounce the *c* of *lacs d'amour* (love snare), which confuses it with *lac* (lake); cf. letter V, XIII, 513. There is nonetheless a darker omen in this "lake where one drowns," both because St. Preux was earlier tempted to drown with Julie in Lake Leman (letter V, XVII, 428) and because of what will take place later (letter VI, IX, 577.

45. The final consonant of all *-er* verbs and even many *-ir* verbs had become silent in French, but could be pronounced when the following word began with a vowel.

46. This is the official title (*magnifique seigneur*) borne by members of the Petit Conseil (Small Council), the governing body of Geneva; Rousseau also dedicated his *Discourse on Inequality* to the "Magnificent, Most Honored, and Sovereign Lords" of the Geneva citizenry (*Collected Writings*, III, 3).

47. On wits and coquettes, see glossary.

48. The *Arabian Nights*, in French called *Les mille et une nuits* ("The Thousand and One Nights"). The "commentary" is equivalent to the beginning of each evening's episode in the *Arabian Nights*. In the *Confessions* Rousseau relates his own

extended readings as a boy with his father; Genevans had a reputation for much reading, which Voltaire reflects in a letter to Linguet: "In several Swiss cities and particularly in Geneva, nearly all those employed in the manufactures spend the time they cannot be working in reading" (15 March 1767).

49. As the note suggests, until early in the eighteenth century the Italianate spelling beginning with *ris-* was the norm in France, perhaps indicating that the *s* was pronounced.

50. See second preface, 13, and note 20.

51. See discussion of Julie's restraint in letter V, 11, 451–452.

52. That is, to engage themselves in the service of a duke or prince.

53. The sometimes humorous description of Genevan society constitutes an exceptional set piece in the last half of the novel, almost all of which is devoted to Clarens; it forms a sort of pendant to St. Preux's descriptions of Paris in part II, of which Julie was critical.

54. A two-masted square-rigger.

55. The three stages are quite unequal: Morges is much closer to Lausanne than to Geneva, and from Lausanne to Clarens is a very short hop.

56. It has been about seven years since she has written to St. Preux (letter III, XX); cf. chronology in appendix III.

57. Fanchon Regard, who benefitted from St. Preux's generosity in part I (letters I, XXXIX–XLIII).

58. On the "monuments," see letter IV, XVII, 424, and note 143.

59. Although Diderot and others had drawn attention to the exploitation of poor girls by irresponsible men, it is unusual in this period to find the prostitute also seen as a kind of victim of society. Rousseau himself suggests in the *Confessions* that he could possibly have been responsible for inflicting such a fate on Marion (Book I, *Collected Writings*, V, 71).

60. The idea that infinite planning and long attention can all be wrecked by a single instant's slip is also constantly repeated in *Emile*.

61. "In other countries" because monastic vows of chastity were not an institution of Protestant societies.

62. That is, I am free of sexual desires.

63. Julie expresses here the careful precautions that must be taken in view of social conventions where such extreme inequality between persons is involved: were Claire's consent not tacitly obtained in advance, any proposal to her from someone so inferior to herself would be an affront.

64. This sentence ("Oui, portez-lui la foi que vous m'avez jurée"), which makes an alexandrine, is a slight misquote or adaptation of Hermione's furious reply to Pyrrhus when she learns he intends to marry Andromaque: "Va lui jurer la foi que tu m'avais jurée" (Racine, *Andromaque*, IV, 5).

65. There appears to be no earlier passage of the novel in which St. Preux expresses such views.

66. St. Paul told believers to "pray without ceasing" (I Thessalonians 5:17).

67. The doctrine of original sin, to which Calvinism ("our Church") certainly subscribed, was an embodiment of this assumption that man is inclined to doing

evil. But, as all of *Emile* makes clear, Rousseau himself rejected original sin, for the essence of natural man is good.

68. Old Testament image: the sanctuary, here equivalent to St. Preux's heart, is the holiest place in the temple, but there are less sacred spaces where an image (that of Claire) could reside.

69. The sea, where Venus was brought forth.

70. Fetch is a continuous expanse of open water.

71. Petrarch, sonnet "I' pur ascolto, et non odo novella."

72. That is, the "chains" of love between St. Preux and Julie.

73. The vows they made to each other with respect to marriage: see letters II, XI-XII, 186–187.

74. The letter referred to is absent from the "collection."

75. Quietism was a quasi-mystical doctrine that advocated resignation in the face of evil and seeking solace directly in God; its best-known proponents were Fénelon, archbishop of Cambrai (1651–1715), and Jeanne Marie Guyon (1648–1717). St. Preux qualifies Julie's form of quietism as coming "by an opposite approach" because Julie neither follows their teachings, nor does her approach, like theirs, call for acceptance of evil; yet it still, out of excessive concern for virtue, might lead to excessive self-denial.

76. The theory expressed in the note returns in *Emile*: "The acts of the conscience are not judgments but sentiments" (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 599; Bloom, 290).

77. This sentence is an almost exact reprise from an earlier letter of St. Preux himself, in letter III, XXI, 315: "But he has given him freedom to do good, conscience to will it, and reason to choose it." It also recurs, in nearly the same terms, in the mouth of the Savoyard vicar in *Emile* (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 605; Bloom, 294).

78. This refusal to accept merely logical arguments against faith returns in the "Profession of Faith of the Savoyard Vicar": "Of what use is it to you to reduce me to silence if you cannot lead me to persuasion. . . . One may very well argue with me about this; but I sense it, and this sentiment that speaks to me is stronger than the reason combating it" (Book IV, Pléiade, IV, 579, 585; Bloom, 275, 280).

79. Various possible identities for these materialist philosophers suggest themselves, in particular Spinoza, Locke, La Mettrie, Condillac, Helvétius, though St. Preux cannot "literally" be referring to the latter three since their principal works were published after 1745, when this part of the novel takes place.

80. George Berkeley (1684–1753), Bishop of Cloyne, maintained that since our perceptions come directly from God, the concept of matter is superfluous.

81. A biblical echo: Peter says: "Of a truth, I perceive that God is no respecter of persons" (Acts of the Apostles 10:34). But St. Preux extends this thought to the point of asserting that God will not provide "assistance" (a secular term for grace) to individuals.

82. "Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why has thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" (Epistle to the Romans 9:20–21).

83. The attitude St. Preux expresses here is resolutely un-Catholic, because it ac-

cords no place to direct revelation through the Church; but neither is the proviso according to which the Bible itself might in certain instances have to be discounted at all acceptable to the Calvinist. The entire paragraph was censored in France: "A most daring doctrine on grace, a revolt against the authority of holy scripture, an *ad hominem* argument against St. Paul: more than is needed to require this excision" (RAL 1298). Rousseau's reply: "If St. Preux wants to be a heretic concerning grace, that is his business. Besides, he really has to defend man's freedom, since elsewhere he makes of the abuse of this freedom the cause of moral evil; . . . and moreover, he should not be treated more harshly by Catholics for rejecting Calvin's decisions than for rejecting the pope's. As for what M. de Malesherbes calls revolt against the authority of Scripture, I call it submission to the authority of God and of reason, which must take precedence over the Bible's, and serves as its foundation: and as for St. Paul, if he does not admit of counter-argumentation, he ought not to argue himself, or at least he should do it better" (RAL 1350).

84. Another word for prayer.

85. Pietism was a specifically Protestant movement, originating at the end of the seventeenth century in Lutheran Germany. This note was excised in the Paris edition so as not to offend the Jansenists (cf. RAL 1298). Rousseau was later to write (in the *Letter to Christophe de Beaumont*) that this comment on the Jansenists was the true cause of all his sufferings, in particular his persecution by the Paris Parlement following the publication of *Emile*.

86. On Fénelon, see note 75 above. The word *disciple* is used in the feminine. Among the many writings of Mme Guyon were twenty volumes of biblical commentaries; given the context, however, the allusion may rather be to the Geneva-born pietist Marie Huber (1695–1753) of whose *État des âmes séparées des corps* ("State of souls separated from their bodies," 1733) Rousseau owned a copy.

87. The two titles here placed in opposition by the allusions "letters" and "divine instinct" in the previous sentence are Muralt's *Letters Describing the Character and Customs of the English and French Nations* earlier quoted by both Julie and St. Preux in part II (see letter II, XIV, 193, and note 68), and *L'instinct divin recommandé aux hommes* ("Divine Instinct recommended to men," 1727). Béat de Muralt became a controversial mystic; by this allusion to his apparent dementia, St. Preux strongly suggests that Julie is on her way to fanaticism if not madness.

88. St. Preux had suggested in letter IV, III, 338–339, that he was composing an account of his travels. The "adventures" are those of Bomston, as related in St. Preux's letters (absent here) and indirectly in the separate "Loves of Milord Edward Bomston."

89. The editor's note is sarcastic about "correct" grammar, suggesting that Julie is after all right to write the word the way she heard it: Julie had written *qu'hors* (with exception of), which implies she was unaware of the "aspirate" *h* of *hors* which prevents its elision with other words.

90. The subject of the preceding paragraph thus concerns every passion but love, which on the contrary continues to fantasize the object of desire.

91. The note is a critique of despotism: by attempting to slake his every desire, the sovereign has made many of his subjects wretched. The French censor re-

proved the passage with these words: "Personally, I believe this observation very true and I understand that the author would hate to sacrifice it. But the application is formidable. Could not M. Rousseau avoid suggesting it without giving up his observation, and merely softening it?" (RAL 1298): the "application," given especially the reference to an absolute power, would obviously be to Louis XV.

92. The "delirium" of the devout could refer in general to mystical trances, but may also be a more pointed allusion to more extreme public manifestations, notably the Jansenist gatherings of *convulsionnaires* in the St. Médard cemetery in Paris in the early 1730s.

93. Metastasio, *Morte d'Abele* (1732).

94. "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord" (Romans 12:19): Julie here explicitly rejects a traditional attribute of the God of the Bible.

95. The last part of this paragraph, beginning "The God I serve," was censored in Paris with this commentary: "In this paragraph and several of those following the author puts into the mouths of Julie and St. Preux the dogma of tolerance, not of civil tolerance, but of theological tolerance, of the tolerance of which it is said that God applies it to those who live in good faith under law other than that of the true Religion. This dogma in fact is rejected among us and Julie as well as St. Preux have accustomed their readers to believe they are always right. What I say about this passage is even more applicable to Julie's dying profession of faith" (RAL 1298).

96. The argument was frequently made that mystical terminology for divine love was too sensual; Julie distances herself from such a tendency. Rousseau will insist in *Emile* that God should be approached through the faculties of reason, not feeling. The Song of Songs (called the Song of Solomon in the King James Bible) to which the note alludes was long since problematic because of the sensual nature of its language, which further lent itself to the kind of mystical reading given by Madame Guyon. This editorial note was excised by the Paris censor: "the Song of Songs is a work revered by the Church and included among the holy writs. Many among us, even some theologians, will share the author's opinion, but they all will advise him to sacrifice this note which really is nothing new" (RAL 1298).

97. The passage from this point to the end of the next paragraph is another that was suppressed in the Paris edition because of its repetition of the plea for tolerance.

98. The word is used in its medical sense, which relates to the balance of bodily fluids that determines one's disposition.

99. The reference in the note has been adapted to fit the current edition: to Wolmar's interjection "Might you be a Christian by chance?" St. Preux had replied: "I endeavor to be one."

100. Isaiah 45:15 "Verily thou are a God that hidest thyself, O God of Isreal, the Saviour" (*Vere tu es deus absconditus*), also the subject of a meditation of Pascal (*Pensées*, Brunschvicg no. 242).

101. See note 177 on Marino's *Adone* in letter II, xxv, 239.

102. The year in question appears to be 1745. François de Bonivard (1496–1570) was Chillon's most famous prisoner: having sided with the Genevan bourgeoisie against the Duc de Savoie, he was imprisoned in the Château de Chillon from 1550 to 1556 and it is he whose story is fancifully celebrated in Byron's *The Prisoner of*

Chillon. The Bailiffs of Vevey governed the château and the Vaud as representatives of Bern. By the phrase "although Savoyard," the editor opposes Savoie, ruled by the king of Sardinia, to the "free" Pays de Vaud.

103. The bailiff of Vevey. "Madame la Baillive" in the next letter is the bailiff's wife. In lieu of "Monsieur le Bailli" Fanchon will write "Monseigneur le Bailli," thus indicating a greater degree of deference for his rank.

104. On the southern shore of the lake, between Évian and Meillerie.

105. With these cryptic interjections Fanchon appears to imply that while the other servants are worrying about their future without Julie, she at least knows Julie has made provision for her.

106. References to the phantasm described by St. Preux in letter V, IX.

107. At the end of letter V, III, Julie had promised a separate discussion of Henriette's education, which has not come until now.

108. Julie described her repeated dreams about him during the delirium accompanying her bout with the smallpox in letter III, XIII, 269–270.

109. Wolmar, as someone probably raised under the Eastern rite, may be thinking instinctively of holy unction—hardly a Calvinist sacrament. The Calvinist (assuming Julie's unorthodox views are still closely related to Calvinism) can do nothing literally on her deathbed to *merit* salvation, but pious or charitable works might be a *sign* of election.

110. His "uncertainty" is what today would be called agnosticism.

111. This is the only use of the word *testament* in the novel; while Julie's attitudes in the face of death have much similarity with Clarissa's, she does not go through the formal motions of Clarissa's elaborate testament described in letters 507–508 (first edition) of *Clarissa*.

112. After giving audiences in his bed, Vespasian tried to get up, having said that an emperor should die standing; but he expired in the effort (Suetonius, life of Vespasian, chap. XXIV, in *Life of the Twelve Caesars*).

113. On *bonne-maman* and *petite-maman*, cf. note 166 to letter V, XIV, 521.

114. This sentence was omitted from the Paris edition.

115. That is, what they have just heard from the minister.

116. The immediate recording of conversations is a novelistic convention to render more plausible the recollection of a long conversation; *Manon Lescaut* (1731), for example, consists entirely of a long conversation recorded afterward by a listener.

117. Julie's declaration is similar to the terms in which Rousseau himself will explain, in the third *Reverie*, his decision in his prime to "submit my inner self to a severe examination which would regulate it for the rest of my life just as I wanted to find it at my death" (Pléiade, I, 1015; Butterworth, 31).

118. These two paragraphs were censored in Paris: "Could not M. Rousseau without entirely sacrificing these passages at least soften them? He had Julie shed so many tears in volume five over her husband's atheism, why should she not maintain this character up to the end? Is this weakness, if it be one, incompatible with the rest of her manner of thinking? Can M. Rousseau not be content with having put unbelief in the mouth and in the heart of a man who, if he is not the work's more interesting character, is certainly not its worst logician?" (RAL 1298).

119. Most of this paragraph was naturally suppressed in the Paris edition: "This

whole part about the lugubrious aspect of the deathbed ceremonies of the Catholic Church must at the least be softened. A Calvinist can read it in his country but he must not print it in France in terms so clear" (RAL 1298).

120. Julie earlier declared, "O death, come when thou wilt! I have no more fear of thee, I have lived, I have anticipated thee" (letter V, VIII, 566). Julie's meditations on death recall in some ways Clarissa's, but are far less elaborate: Clarissa indeed had her coffin brought into her room (letter 450, original edition).

121. She discounts, evidently, d'Étange's two grandsons, perhaps because they are small children.

122. We are no doubt to understand: "Thy will be done," in a sense the most difficult of all prayers in that one must abandon one's own will and submit wholly to God's.

123. This declaration is ambiguous: either she is suggesting that she was from the start so sensual as to be highly vulnerable to seduction by others had he not come alone; or that somehow his overriding virtue, despite his seduction of her, has throughout life shored up her own weaker virtue (it was after all he who rejected her adulterous proposal in letter III, XV, 275–276).

124. The satisfaction found in the contemplation of suffering (complacent or vicarious) is a theme of many novels beginning with Prévost (notably in *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité*, 1728–1731, and *Le philosophe anglais*, 1732–1738).

125. This is one of several Christic echoes in Julie's death agony: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matthew 18:20). Clarissa, on the other hand, left letters for many people with explicit instructions regarding her funeral and everything else.

126. This discussion referred to in the note is found in the *Phaedo*, 80^{b}–82^{c}.

127. An echo of Pascal: "It is the heart that experiences God, and not reason" (*Pensées*, Brunschvicg no. 278).

128. The conclusion in the footnote represents a preference for pure intuition over intellection; the world of the spirit is more accessible (and perhaps more reliable) than the Cartesian causality of the physical realm.

129. These five paragraphs were suppressed in the Paris edition of 1761.

130. The phrase is an echo of Andromache's "smiling through her tears" as she and Hector part in the *Iliad* (canto VI).

131. The "certain times" in the note are specifically from May to late September; this scene takes place in August or September (see chronology).

132. With respect to the footnote, see letter IV, X, describing what one might call the social engineering at Clarens.

133. Bitterness suggests hemlock, and thus an analogy with the death of Socrates. But the imagery of the cup also recalls the death of Jesus, who prayed in the Garden of Olives, "O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matthew 26:39).

134. This scene (which Rousseau did not select for illustration, but which was later illustrated by Moreau) might be compared to the deathbed tableau in *Clarissa* (original edition, letter 481).

135. On "parricide," see glossary.

136. This is the subject of Rousseau's twelfth, untitled engraving.

137. In other words, she has not been wrapped in a shroud, as would be usual, before burial.

138. This sentence has particular relevance for Julie's project of marrying St. Preux and Claire, ostensibly in order to preserve them from temptations but also, as now becomes clear, in order to reinforce the barriers against the possibility Julie might herself slip into adultery.

139. Julie is still referring to herself here; her "better part" on the other hand will be Claire.

140. Whether the "great task" of converting Wolmar can be assumed to expect eventual realization is a disputed matter among critics. Rousseau's letter to Jacob Vernes is sometimes cited: "You reproach me for not having made Wolmar change his System at the end of the novel; my dear Vernes, you have then not read this ending; for his conversion is indicated there with a clarity that could not suffer more extensive development without being willing to write a homily" (24 June 1761, RAL 1436). This hardly decides the issue, however, since Rousseau may have been overstating his intentions to reassure Vernes.

141. Rousseau's final note expresses two new, important themes different in nature. The first is the moral delight to be found in a book whose characters are all good. The second is the perspective of a creative author: despite the ambiguity of authorship and the reference to his rereading of this "collection," the "editor" speaks from the standpoint of a novelist who is inventing his characters. The two themes join in the pleasure of inventing (and vicariously living with) characters who are good, which is the opposite of the tragic process.

Editors' Notes to the Appendixes

1. According to the *Confessions*, Rousseau considered incorporating this narrative of Edward's adventures into the text of *Julie* but "finally decided to cut them out altogether because they would have spoiled its touching simplicity since they did not have the same tone as all the rest" (*Collected Writings*, V, 439). The only source for it is the handwritten copy of *Julie* he made for the Maréchale de Luxembourg, to which he appended it; it was first published in the Dupeyrou (Geneva) edition of 1780, after Rousseau's death.

2. Letter IV, xvii, 428.

3. On the subject of "mercenary love," cf. letter VI, vi, 549.

4. The convent was in the eighteenth century a place of refuge as well as a home for the religious.

5. The formulation is similar to what St. Preux says to Julie in part I: "when I cease to love virtue, I will no longer love you" (letter I, v, 34).

6. This apparent oxymoron is an indication of the complexity of the notion of *amour-propre* in Rousseau; see glossary.

7. Austria was considered part of Germany in the eighteenth century, with Vienna as its capital.

8. "Ministrations" (*soins*) is an extreme euphemism for the sex act which, instead of propagating the race, would in this way be serving to extinguish it.

9. The word "supplement" is almost always pejorative in Rousseau: it implies

going beyond natural needs or having recourse to decadent substitutes (he applies it for example to masturbation in the *Confessions*, *Collected Writings*, V, 91). Here it refers to lovers who can make up to her for Edward's abstinence.

10. This strange shift from singular to plural is in the original; the elliptical sentence goes almost without transition from the general to the particular.

11. The engraver's tool; cf. note 145 to letter IV, VII, 425.

12. "Explanation" (*explication*) is a sort of genre frequent in books of the period, which decoded the allegories or otherwise clarified the subjects of illustrations; but they were normally *added to* the engravings and not prescriptions *for* them. Rousseau had illustrations in mind from early on; by the time arrangements were made with Gravelot, however, they could not be ready in time for publication with the text at the end of 1760. They were therefore published separately, in both Paris and Amsterdam, but by different engravers in the two cases. (The plates were finally published with the novel in 1764, with a substitution for the twelfth.) Each description was accompanied by a page reference to the original (Amsterdam) edition; these are replaced here by references to the present edition.

13. This is the only indication of the color of Claire's hair, which makes for a significant contrast with her blond cousin. This difference corresponds to different psychological associations which Rousseau comments on in Book IX of the *Confessions*: "I endowed them with two analogous but different characters, with two appearances. . . . I made one a brunette and the other blonde, one lively and the other gentle, one wise and the other weak" (*Collected Writings*, V, 361).

14. A hoop of whalebone or wire to fluff out the petticoat.

15. So delicious.

16. Like most of the legends, this one is not a direct quotation from the text but a paraphrase of the event. Indeed the description specifies from the beginning that the precise moment represented (the fainting) *follows* the kiss. But as Rousseau's introductory principles indicate, his ambition is also to capture a *before* and *after* implied in the given moment.

17. Neither "heroism" (*héroïsme*) nor "valor" (*valeur*) actually appears in the passage to which this plate corresponds, but there are several similar terms: *fierté*, *justice*, *honneur*, *respect*, *admiration*.

18. What Bomston says in the text is longer; this is a sort of short gist of it, or a sort of voice-over coming from outside the text, perhaps from the "editor." "Young man" (*jeune homme*) is used numerous times in the novel (and in this text) to refer to St. Preux; the word "benefactor" (*bienfaiteur*) does not appear in the passage illustrated, but is used three times in the novel by St. Preux in referring to Bomston.

19. This almost allegorical legend accompanies a scene that St. Preux had not himself described in his letter.

20. In contrast to most of the legends, this one is a direct quotation from Claire's letter III, XIV, 274. Rousseau was irate when some contemporaries read indecent suggestions into it. To François Coindet, who suggested he change it, he replied: "I have never wished to change my writings to prevent indecent interpretations. When my ideas are pure and my expressions proper, I do not trouble myself if it pleases the reader to dirty them; that is his business. Moreover I would be hard pressed to find another word in place of that one. The plate explains it well

enough so that it would require an awfully obscene imagination to find another explanation" (RAL 1280, 11 February 1761; see also RAL 1286).

21. Like several others, this legend functions as a kind of voice-over from some external narrator. The key words in this legend are linked not in the passage illustrated but in another, from Julie's letter IV, XII, relating Wolmar's words to St. Preux in letter IV, XII, 407. See also the commentary by "N." in the second preface, 8.

22. This quotation differs somewhat from the text of letter IV, VII, 424–425; Rousseau must have copied it from an earlier manuscript than the one he sent to the printer.

23. This amount of detail will illustrate the tremendous demands being made by Rousseau on his artist, who after all was working in an extremely compact medium (only about 12 x 7.5 cm). Gravelot in fact made no attempt at all to capture Julie's eyes in this plate.

24. "Bygone" (*ancien*) also means former and even old or ancient, which is why it goes with the term "monuments" in the text of the novel.

25. In fact, the fifth.

26. *Sous la table*; one of the manuscripts instead says *sur la table* ("on the table"), which seems more logical and corresponds to the engraving itself.

27. This legend comes straight from the text, and is the only occurrence in *Julie* of the ambiguous expression *à l'anglaise*; cf. note 32 to letter V, III, 456.

28. This word (*fantôme* or *phantôme*) can designate illusions even abstractly, but seems here close to the idea of hallucinations. The "voice" of the legend, if it is Edward's, is not from the text of the novel, nor does it correspond to the moment pictured, since St. Preux is still alone.

29. This is of all the legends the one least directly related to the scene of the illustration. It is the dramatic adaptation (in the form of an exclamation) of an unrelated metaphor occurring much earlier in the text: "You behave with respect to love, which you pretend to laugh at, like those children who sing at night when they are afraid" (Julie to Claire, V, XIII, 518): this scene is an *example* of the *behavior* Julie was describing, and is another instance of a kind of voice-over.

30. A small but interesting divergence from the text of the novel, where the veil is placed on Julie's face *before* Claire speaks.

31. Rousseau is evoking a double meaning here: "casual" (*négligé*) in French style does not mean that the dress is in any way negligent (it can be quite coquettish) but that its style is informal, not dressed-up; what he is asking the artist to convey, as will be clear from the following description, is instead a genuine *négligence*, something that is in no way indecent but is distractedly imperfect.

32. The only discrepancy noted in the novel's first half is the fact that Bomston will come through Vevey just after St. Preux's appearance there (in 1737), a year later than the plan he first announced.

33. Condillac: *L'art d'écrire*, in *Œuvres de Condillac* (Paris: Ch. Houel, An VI, 1798), VII, 236.

34. *Obermann* (Paris: Hachette, 1912–1913), II, 91.

35. This table was not written by Rousseau nor included in the first edition, but appeared in the Duchesne edition of 1764, in the margins of which he wrote that it was all right to retain it because it could be useful for locating content.

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